

Ali in Biblical Clouds

Veneration of Ali in Islamic Mysticism

علي
مكاننا
رفعناه

Abu Shahiryar

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2015

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Preface

ĀLI ibn Abi Talib (may Allah be pleased with him) was born thirty four years after the Year of Elephant¹ in 18 BH (604 CE) at Makkah in ancient Arabia². He was the cousin and son-in-law of the prophet Muhammad. Āli means “the exalted one”. He was the fourth son after Talib, Aqeel and Jafar.

An unknown narrator, *Yazeed bin Qanab* informed about the birth account of Āli ³:

Saeed bin Jubair narrated that I heard Yazid bin Qan’ab saying that I was sitting among Abbas bin Abdul Muttalib and some people from Bani Abd-al-Uzza that suddenly Fatimah bint Asad (mother of Āli) came she was going through ninth month of pregnancy and she was feeling pangs. She raised her hands for prayer and said: “O Lord I believe in you and in your messengers and the books you sent. I testify the words of forefather Abraham and also I confirm in what Abraham, the one who built The Beit al-Atiq (Ka’aba). So make my labor easy, in the name of Abraham and in the name of the child I have in me.” We saw a crack appear in the wall of the Ka’aba. Fatima went through the opening and disappeared into the House. We also searched for the crack in the wall, but saw no crevice there. We knew it was the will of Allah. Four days later, Fatima came out of the Ka’aba carrying Āli . Fatima bint Assad said: “Allah preferred me to all women before me. Assiah (wife of the Pharaoh) performed the acts of worship in seclusion where Allah did not like to be worshipped except in case of necessity. Mary, daughter of Imran shook the trunk of the palm-tree and ripe dates fell upon her. I entered the House of Allah and ate fruits of Paradise, when I was about to leave the place, I heard the divine Voce (Bat Qol) ’O Fatima! Name your son Āli , because he is Exalted and Allah Al-Ali Al-Alla (الله العلي الأعلى) said: I gave

¹ Year of Elephant was the misadventure of Abraha, King of Himyar to destroy the Kabbah in year 570 CE (53 BH) According to Islamic tradition, it was in this year that Prophet Muhammad (*Peace be upon him*) was born.

² According to Imam Baqir Āli died at age of 58 years on 40 AH (See Moajam Al-Sahabh by Abu Qasim Al-Baghwi and Seer Al-Allam Al-Nubla by Al-Dahabi)

³ Kitab Al-Amali by Sheikh Al-Sadooq, Narrator of the report *Yazeed bin Qanab* is unknown both among Sunni and Shiite scholars (Not mentioned in any encyclopaedia of Rijal (narrators) including Kitab Al-Mufid min Moajam al-Rijal by Al-Jawahiri). Narrator has totally forgot that Hatim is also the part of Kabba and during four days any one can enter Kabba. Further the door of Kabba was of wood and cannot be locked from inside.

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him a name derived from my Own name. I cultured him the way I willed. I made known to him the intricacies of My Own Omniscience. He is the one to crush the idols in My House. He is the one to call people to prayer from the roof of My House. He worships Me. Blessed are those who love him and woe to those who are his enemies.”

Āli and Controversies

Āli accepted Islam at age of eight and according to some reports at age of sixteen⁴. His brother Jafar also accepted Islam at the same time. Abu Talib still pagan was a benevolent father and he had not forced his children to renounce Islam. After Prophet Muhammad (*Peace be upon him*) migrated to Medinah Āli also migrated and after a year he got married with Fatimah the daughter of Prophet. Āli was pious, humble and had good warrior skills which gave him distinct position among companions of Prophet. Being close relative of Prophet Muhammad (*Peace be upon him*) he received many privileges like other Ahl-Bayt, which God had given to them.

When Prophet died, some of the Ansar (The Helpers, People of Medinah) gathered at a park called *Saqifah Bani Saadah* in the precincts of city and started discussion on future leadership. Abu Bakr and Umer came to know about this and they went there. *Ansar* held the view that they have the right of caliphate as they have supported Prophet more than any other in Arabia. Their spokesperson Saad bin Ibadah was also a chief of his tribe, *Al-Khizrij*⁵. Abu Bakr and Umer convinced Medinan people that Prophet had said that caliphs will be from Quraish. The politically sound verdict was accepted by all parties and all agreed to appoint Abu Bakr as first caliph. Apparently Āli was unaware of these developments and he missed the opportunity. Āli was from Quraish, from the family of the Prophet and the son-in-law of the Prophet's living daughter. He therefore could also be a caliph, however, Abu Bakr the closest friend of Prophet has more charisma than Āli. He was the first among adults who accepted Islam and to him Āli was like his own child. During the last days, Prophet continuously asked Abu Bakr to act as Imam on his behalf.

Shiites held a different point of view. According to them Āli was appointed by God as a future caliph while Prophet was still in Makkah. He was declared as caliph in Night of The Ascension and Prophet was informed to tell this to all Ummah. However that did not happened. Prophet had not even announced that during his last Hajj. While Prophet Muhammad (*Peace be upon him*) was returning back to Medinah, God instructed Prophet to declare Āli as caliph. Prophet stopped the returning caravan and gave a speech in which he only called Āli (*Maula*) as his friend. Again the opportunity of public announcement of the Divine Verdict was missed. Quran too is devoid of any hint over caliphate of Āli, so to cover up their misconception, Ghulat and Shiites made up the view that Quran had been altered.

⁴ According to Hasan Al-Basri. See Moajam Al-Sahabh by Abu Qasim Al-Baghwi (d. 317 AH)

⁵ After the oath of allegiance for Abu Bakr someone said to Umer: “You (literally) killed Saad bin Ibadah”. Umer said: “Allah killed him”. See Sahih Bukhari; According to Madaini Saad bin Ibadah died in era of Abu Bakr; According to other he died in 16 AH at Hawran (Seer Al-Allam Al-Nubla by al-Dahabi). Hawran is a volcanic plateau in Syria also mentioned in Book of Ezekiel 47:16-18

On death of Prophet (11 AH), Fatimah the daughter of Prophet asked Abu Bakr to hand over the gardens of Fadak (in Khaibar) to her as she was the only surviving daughter of Prophet at that time. Prophet however advised his companions not to distribute these gardens in inheritance but all earning should be given in way of God after covering the living expenses of his wives and family members. The gardens were considered as a gift from God to His Prophet and according to Quran the earnings must be divided into five equal accounts, namely for (1) God and His Prophet, (2) Prophet's relatives, (3) orphans (4) poor (5) needy travelers. This can only be done by Prophet himself or after his death by caliphs as the gardens were not solely for Prophet's family.

Abu Bakr held the view that he would only distribute it in the causes in which Prophet himself was distributing. Fatimah, however, become angry on this issue and stopped speaking to Abu Bakr until she died. Āli too avoided Abu Bakr initially and after Fatimah death⁶ he came to Abu Bakr and gave oath of his allegiance. Later in the era of caliph Umer, Umer handed over all accounts to Āli to manage and handle.

At the point of his death (13 AH), Abu Bakr advised Umer to take the position of caliph. Umer ruled for the next ten years and eight months. He was murdered in 23 AH by a Persian slave Abu Lulu Feroz who later committed suicide according to reliable history⁷.

Umer established a committee to decide about the future leadership and after consultation, Uthman was preferred over Āli. Āli and Uthman both were sons-in-law of Prophet but Uthman was much older than Āli.

Uthman had appointed companion of Prophet Walid bin Aqbah his step brother from his mother, as governor of Kufa. It is reported that in Fajr prayer at Kufa, he prayed two Raka' and after finishing said to people do you want more⁸. According to another report he prayed four raka'⁹. It is claimed that he was drunk and Hudayn bin Al-Mundar¹⁰ reached Uthman to discuss the issue. Two witnesses of Kufa also testified that Walid bin Aqbah had consumed alcohol. Walid bin Aqbah was lashed forty times. This shows that Uthman was very strict in management contrary to Shiite propaganda. Al-Dahabi said: "Walid along with his sins- may Allah forgive him - was a brave man steadfast on Jihad". Uthman removed Walid¹¹ from office and appointed Saeed bin Al-Aas as new governor¹². After some time agitators like Malik bin Harith Al-Ashtar, Kumail bin Ziyad, Sasaa bin Sohan, Harith Al-Aor and some others came to Uthman to remove Saeed bin Al-Aas. Malik Al-Ashtar told a fabricated story of meeting companion of Prophet, Abu Zarr while coming to Medinah¹³. Saeed also came

⁶ Six months after death of Prophet Muhammad (*Peace be upon him*)

⁷ According to Shiites Āli gave his horse to the slave and he ran back to Persia where he lived longer and now there is a big shrine dedicated to *Feroz Shah*.

⁸ Sahih Muslim

⁹ Musnad Ahmed

¹⁰ He was supporter of Āli

¹¹ Walid remained in Medinah and had not participated in any of the later wars between Muawiyah and Āli.

¹² Tabqat Ibn Saad

¹³ It was the propaganda of Shiites that Abu Zar was left in the desert to die and he had only his wife

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to Uthman and explained the situation of Kufa. Uthman removed him from office and appointed Abu Musa Al-Ashari as governor but when Saeed explained all situation he reinstalled Saeed as governor.

Following is the list of Governors of Kufa changed during Umer and Uthman era due to complains:

- Saad bin Abi Waqas (Umer removed Saad from office due to complains of People of Kufa in 21 AH¹⁴)
- Mughairah bin Shobah (He was the governor since Umer era and Uthman also appointed him as governor¹⁵.)
- Saad bin Abi Waqas (appointed after Mughairah)
- Waleed bin Aqbah (appointed in 25 AH)
- Saeed bin Al-Aas (appointed in 29 AH)
- Abu Musa Al-Ashari (appointed in 34 AH¹⁶)
- Saeed bin Al-Aas (appointed in 34 AH)

One can immediately see that People of Kufa were agitators and like to continuously disturb their governors. Uthman had changed governor six different times over Kufa to please them.

Uthman had appointed Abdullah bin Abi Sarh, his step brother as governor of Egypt. As an advisor to governor Uthman appointed his adopted son Muhammad bin Abi Huzaifah. Abdallāh ibn Sabā also reached Egypt in those days and he started his preaching there¹⁷. Some *Dhimi* (non-Muslims specially Coptic Christians) complained and protested about too much taxes placed by Islamic caliphate on them. During this time famine struck Egypt and protest started growing. News of disturbance in Egypt reached Uthman and Abdullah bin Abi Sarh left Egypt to see Uthman. When he reach the border of Egypt he came to know that Muhammad bin Abi Huzaifah has took power in his hands. Abdullah bin Abi Sarh went to Syria, realizing that a conspiracy was brewing.

Uthman appointed Muhammad bin Abi Bakr¹⁸, adopted son of Āli as governor of Egypt. It is said that during this time there was an alleged letter of Uthman that reached Muhammad bin Abi Huzaifah which instructed the assassination of the newly appointed governor of Egypt. Muhammad bin Abi Huzaifah showed the letter to Muhammad bin Abi Bakr to prove that Uthman wanted to eliminate him. Situation become worse and Muhammad bin Abi Bakr from Egypt, Malik Al-Ashtar from Kufa and hundreds of ruffians and supporters attacked Uthman's house in Medinah during Hajj period.

with him. So when Malik Al Ashtar was coming back to Medinah, Abu Zarr's wife came to see Malik and draw his attention towards their sorry state. It is not clear why Āli had not helped Abu Zarr in this situation.

¹⁴Tareekh Khalifa bin Khayat

¹⁵Seer Al-Allam Al-Nubla by Al-Dahabi

¹⁶Seer Al-Allam Al-Nubla

¹⁷Egypt had Jewish population also and recently discovered Cairo Geniza fragments prove that they have an active social life in Egypt.

¹⁸He was originally son of Abu Bakr from Asma bint Amees. After death of Abu Bakr, Āli married her and raised Muhammad.

It was a carefully crafted pre-planned act. To support each other, rebel groups from different parts of Egypt and Iraq, all arrive in Medinah at the same time, during the month of Dhul-Haja. They asked the resignation of Uthman and news spread like wild fire in all quarters of Muslim world. Companions of Prophet swiftly left Hajj to go back to Medinah. While Aisha, Talha and Zubair were in the way, the news of Uthman assassination reached. Uthman was assassinated in 35 AH and this put the whole Islamic World on trial.

Rebels do not want to take the blame on themselves so they shrewdly showed their allegiance to Āli . Muhammad bin Abi Bakr and Malik Al-Ashtar both were close friends and they mobilised the rebellion in Āli 's support. Āli was in Medinah and he took power in his hands and declared himself caliph. Āli had not been offered the governorship of any of the regions during previous caliphs era.

Companions of Prophet Muhammad (*Peace be upon him*) Talha and Prophet's cousin Zubair¹⁹ were involved in Hajj when Uthman was murdered. They decided to go to Basrah instead of returning back to Medinah. So they went to Basrah along Mother of Believers Aisha, daughter of Abu Bakr. Aisha got involved as she did not want to support the ruffian Muhammad bin Abi Bakr which Āli was protecting. Āli sent Ammar bin Yasir to resolve the growing dispute. People of Basra got agitated and civil war broke out.

Two groups fought wars and hundreds of people got killed in civil wars including Zubair and Talha. Āli made Muhammad bin Abi Bakr as governor of Egypt but then removed him and later installed Malik Al-Ashtar (originally from Yemen) as governor. Muawiyah, had Greater Syria still in his control. His forces attacked Egypt and captured gang leaders of the mob that attacked and killed Uthman. They were all executed and Āli was unable to help them. In spite of all such issues Āli still had more supporters in Islamic World than Muawiyah. Muawiyah gave Āli an option of truce. Āli accepted that offer and Muawiyah signed a truce with Āli . This infuriated Āli supporters and mutiny erupted in his camp. Āli 's supporters divided into *Khawarij* (The Rebels) and *Shiites* (The Supporters). Later, one *Kharji* rebel from Egypt Abdur Rehman ibn Muljim killed Āli and caliphate is transferred to his son Hasan.

Table 1: **Battles of Caliph Āli**

Battle	Location	Year
Battle of Jamal	Basrah	36 AH
Battle of Siffin	Ar-Raqqah	37 AH
Battle of Naharwan	Naharwan	39 AH

Hasan acted as caliph for seven months but he renounced the position of caliph in favour of Muawiyah and asked him to come to Kufa for formal agreement. Muawiyah accepted the offer and become sixth caliph. One of the article of the truce was that

¹⁹Zubair was son of Prophet's Aunt Safiyah. His father was from Asad clan of the Quraysh tribe. According to Sahih Bukhari People were in favour of making Zubair as caliph after Uthman. However Āli was also willing to get the caliphate and his Shiites paved the way for him.

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Muawiyah would work as caliph but after his death the caliphate would return to Hasan. However Hasan died earlier than Muawiyah²⁰ and as according to rule the agreement was between Muawiyah and Hasan, Muawiyah continued as a caliph. Muawiyah now announced in the whole caliphate through his governors that his son Yazid would be a future caliph after his death. There had been no out right rejection of this idea. This was continuously announced for three years before Muawiyah death. However none objected and disagreed. Kufian supporters of Hussain, wrote secret letter to Hussain and asked him to come to Kufa as soon as Muawiyah dies.

After Muawiyah's death, Hussain did not gave oath of his allegiance and went to Kufa along seventy two members of his family. Ibn Abbas the cousin of Prophet also tried to persuade Hussain not to engage in the exodus against caliph. But Hussain was determined to go to Kufa. During the course of his journey towards Kufa, due to some unknown circumstances, Hussain opted not to go to Kufa and went forty miles north of Kufa. He was captured by a clandestine mob at Karbala²¹ and was brutally murdered. Shiites placed the blame of his murder on Yazid's Government and others on his supporters²². Surviving household of Hussain were taken to Damascus where they were tread with honour according to Sunni sources and according to Shiite sources, they were imprisoned.

After this event Yazid lived for four years and after his death, his son Muawiyah bin Yazid become caliph. Also at Makkah, Abdullah bin Zubair rebelled. Ibn Zubair established his caliphate till Iraq and Ummayad were confined in Syria only for a while. A Ghulat leader *Mukhtar Al-Thaqafi*²³ appeared in those days and made an assassin army to eliminate the Ummayad governors involved in murder of Hussain, which he himself claimed without any evidence. His group took over Kufa and finally Musab bin Zubair brother of Abdullah bin Zubair killed him at Basra in a battle.

In Syria Yazid's son renounce the position of caliph and Marwan bin Al-Hakam become the caliph. Abdullah bin Zubair although initially victorious he too got defeated and Ummayad forces surrounded Makkah. Ibn Zubair confined himself in Kabbah but this did not stop the ruthless army of Ummayads to kill him. They used catapults and destroyed the Kabbah. Walls of Kabbah collapsed and Ibn Zubair died inside Kabbah and his dead body was crucified by Ummayad general Hajjaj bin Yusuf. Hajjaj bin Yusuf was shrewd and ruthless general. He infant crushed all rebellion in favour of Ummayad caliphs and finally Banu Ummayah become politically very strong and they ruled till 132 AH when Abbasid revolted. Ghulats appeared in such political tensions and they view the situations from different angle as will be explored in this book.

²⁰ According to Shiites Hasan was poisoned by his wife who was a spy of Muawiyah

²¹ A place near *Razzaza Lake*. According to Yaqut al-Hamawi, site was known to have soft ground.

²² Like Abdullah ibn Umer, son of second caliph, called people of Iraq as murders of Hussain instead of People of Greater Syria.

²³ Mukhatr initially supported Ibn Zubair but later he started deviant preaching. He claimed that Āli's son Muhammad ibn Hanfiah is Al-Mahdi. Ibn Hanfiah however didn't like this and remained an ally of Ummayads. Mukhtar asked Shiites and Mawala (persian slaves) to join with his ranks. Notable Ahl Bayt remained aloof from supporting Mukhtar. His sect is called Kessaniyah. Mukhtar also claimed that he has the chair of Āli which is like Ark of Covenant and will give them victory over their enemies.

Governors of Āli

During his era, most of the governors²⁴ Āli appointed were his relatives specially his cousins from uncle Abbas.

Table 2: **Governors appointed by Caliph Āli**

Location	Governors
Makkah	Abu Qatadah Al-Ansari and after him Qatham bin Abbas
Medinah	Qatham bin Abbas
Kufa	Abu Masud during battle of Siffin and Hani bin Hodah during battle of Naharwan
Khurasan	Al-Ahnaf bin Qais
Basrah	Uthman bin Hanif and after him Abdallah ibn Abbas
Yemen	Ubaidullah ibn Abbas
Egypt	Qais bin Saad bin Ibadah, Muhammad bin Abi Bakr and after him Malik Al-Ashtar
Daylam	Abdallah ibn Abbas

Āli wanted to appease Saad bin Ibadah family so he appointed his son, Qais bin Saad bin Ibadah as governor of Egypt, but he had soft corner for Muawiyah so removed him.

Family of Āli

According to Arabian culture in those days, Āli married several women. While Fatimah was still alive he did not marry another women but he showed his intentions to marry the Muslim daughter of Prophet's arch rival Abu Jahal, which Prophet did not accepted and in a speech on his pulpit, he compared his son-in-laws and praised Abi Alas bin Rabee²⁵ over Ali.

Āli & his family²⁶ are tabulated in Table 3. Āli can only keep four wives at a time. His wives are indicated by letter "W" in the table. Khawlah bint Jafar bin Qais was given to Ali by Abu Bakr after battle of Yamamah. According to Al-Madaini²⁷ Āli received her as slave from Yemen during life time of Prophet. According to Baladuri more authentic report says that she was given to Āli by Abu Bakr during his reign. So Ali freed her and

²⁴ See *Seer Al-Allam Al-Nubla* by Al-Dahabi, *Tareekh Al-Baghdad* by Khateeb Al-Baghdadi, *Tareekh Damishq* by Ibn Asakir, *Ansab Al-Ashraf* by Al-Baladuri

²⁵ Prophet's son in law, husband of Zaynab

²⁶ See *Jamhara-tul-Ansab* by Ibn Hazam (d. 456 AH), *Ansab Al-Ashraf* by Al-Baladuri (d. 279 AH), *Nasab Al-Quraish* by Musab bin Abdullah (d. 237 AH), *Jamha-tul-Ansab* by al-Kalbi (d. 204 AH)

²⁷ See *Ansab Al-Ashraf* by Al-Baladuri

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Table 3: **Family of Āli**

Wives or Concubines	Sons	Daughters
(1W) Fatimah bint Muham-mad (<i>daughter of Prophet</i>)	Hasan Hussain Mohsin	Zynab Al-Kubra (<i>married to Abdullah bin Jafar bin Abi Talib</i>) Umm Kalsum Al-Kubra (<i>married to Umer bin Al-Khattab</i>)
(2W) Amamah bint Abi Alas (<i>Prophet's grand daughter</i>)	Muhammad (<i>Al-Awsat</i>)	
(3W) Umm Al-Banen bint Hazam (<i>from Bani Kalb</i>)	Abbas Jafar Al-Akbar Uthman Abdullah	
(4W) Umm Saeed (<i>from Banu Thqif sister of Ur-wah bin Masud</i>)		Ramlah Umm Al-Hasan
(5W) Asma bint Amees (<i>widow of Abu Bakr</i>)	Yahya	
(6W) Khawlah bint Jafar (<i>from Bani Hanif</i>)	Aoun Muhammad ibn Hanfiyah	
(7) Sahbah bint Rabiyah (<i>from Bani Taghlib</i>)	Umer (<i>Youngest son</i>)	Ruqayyah
(8) Layla bint Masud (<i>from Bani Tamim</i>)	Abu Bakr Ubaidullah	
(9) Warqa	Muhammad (<i>Al-Asghar</i>)	
(10) Asma bint Aqeel	Muhammad	Umm Musa
(11) Umm Wald	Muhammad	Fatimah Al-Sughra
(12) Al-Mahyah bint Amri (<i>from Bani Kalb</i>)		Jariyah

married her. She gave birth to Muhammad bin Ali later become famous as Muhammad bin Hanfiyah in history. Twelver Shiites²⁸ reduced his importance by claiming that he was the son of the bound woman. Muhammad bin Hanfiyah was the first person who was called *Al-Mahdi*²⁹ by his supporters. Shiites claim that Āli's four wives Amamah bint Abi Alas, Umm Al-Banen bint Hazam, Asma bint Amees and Layla bint Masud were alive at the time of his death. This is necessary to claim as they want to make sure that Khawlah bint Jafar bin Qais should not be considered as wife of Āli. Keisaniyya Sect claim that Muhammad ibn Āli or Muhammad bin Hanfiyah is the true imam or leader. After his death sect calimed that he did not die but hiding in ridges of the Radwa mountains near Makkah. Muhammad ibn Āli or Muhammad bin Hanfiyah himself had good relations with Caliph Abdul Malik and caliph had even invited him to Damascus to discuss the relevant issues. Twelver Shiites due to this does not like him. Even in time of traveller Al-Birini (died 1038), three centuries after Mohammed Ibn al-Hanfiyah, his *return* was still awaited by Shiites³⁰.

In Table 3 the names of Āli's son in red are those who died in battle. All died along Hussain in Karbala, Iraq except Ubaidullah who died in fighting Mukhtar Al-Thaqafi in fighting from Musab bin Umair side.

Āli died on January 28, 661 CE (Ramadan 21, 40 AH) at age of 58 years. He ruled four years and nine months. Al-Dahabi has quoted Asbag bin Nabata that he said that Ali was informed by Prophet that he:

... will be struck (by sword) when seventeen (days) are past in Ramadan, the day on which Moses died and Jesus raised to Heavens

According to Ghulat Āli had not died. He simply moved up and become occult in clouds. Imam Al-Ashari wrote³¹:

... a devil in Āli appearance had been murdered whereas Āli himself had ascended to heaven and that his Return (Raj'aa) was imminent

This book explores both Sunni and Shiite literature for the historical development of Ghulat sects and their main motif and themes. It is assumed in this analysis that Ghulats³² were affirm in their believes and they had no hidden political agenda. The basis of their believes is investigated in light of Jewish scriptures (Torah, Prophetic literature, Talmud), Quran and hadith genre of Sunni and Shiite sources.

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²⁸ Athna Al-Ashari

²⁹ Islamic Messiah figure. Originally political opponent of Ummayyad Caliphate but later become an apocalyptic figure among Shiite sects.

³⁰ See Shiitic Elements in Jewish Sectarianism by Israel Friedlaender, Jewish Quarterly Review, Vol III, No2, 1012, 1910

³¹ Maqallat al-Islamiyyeen

³² Israel Friedlander view based on fifteen points (later called Early Proto Shiiteism) that early Shiites were the Jewish Isuniyah or Isawiyah sect of Persia and Arabia. See Shiitic Elements in Jewish Sectarianism by Israel Friedlaender, Jewish Quarterly Review, Vol III, No2, 1012, pp 235 - 300, 1910.

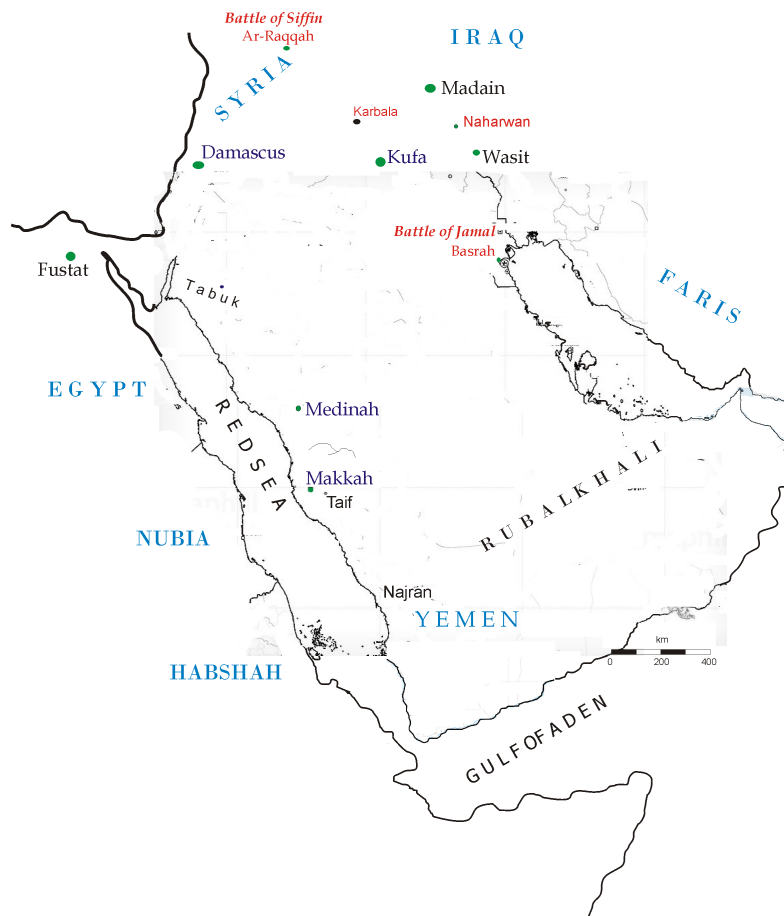


Figure 1: Map of Middle East in Era of Āli : Cities in purple were made capitals in different periods. **Medinah**: Made as capital during rule of Abu Bakr, Umer and Uthman. **Kufa** made capital during Āli 's caliphate. Now in Najaf, Iraq. **Makkah** made capital during Abdallah ibn Zubair's caliphate; **Damascus** made capital during Muawiyah's caliphate and after him by Ummayyad rulers. Karbala is the location where Hussain was killed.

Locations marked in Red shows places where important battles or events occurred.

Battle of Jamal was between Āli versus Talha, Zubair and Aisha; **Battle of Siffin** was between Āli versus Muawiyah; **Battle of Naharwan** was between Āli and Khawarij rebels

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Chapter 1

Ezekiel in Babylon

*... and seated above the likeness of a Throne
was a likeness with a human appearance*
- Ezekiel (1:26)

EZEKIEL ben Buzi was a biblical prophet who was from *Anathoth*¹ and he was born into the priesthood lineage. He belonged to upper class Jews who were exiled to Babylon. At the bank of Chebar river, Ezekiel saw a vision. He saw in sky among clouds the great heavenly chariot held by angles having four faces. One face was like human, one like ox, one like eagle and one like lion. There was lightening around the chariot, called *Merkavah*. Ezekiel saw (Ezekiel 1:26):

וּמִמֶּעַל, לָרָקִיעַ אֲשֶׁר עַל־רֹאשׁוֹ, כְּמֵרָאָה אֲבִנִּסְפִּיר, דְּמוּת כֶּסֶּא; וְעַל, דְּמוּת
הַכֶּסֶּא, דְּמוּת כְּמֵרָאָה אָדָם עָלָיו, מִלְּמַעְלָה

And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone; and upon the likeness of the throne was a likeness as the appearance of a man upon it above.

Jewish sages had prohibited to use these passages to relate the person on *Merkavah* as God Almighty. However the idea of God moving in clouds was become well accepted. Deuteronomy 33:26 says:

*There is none like God, O Jeshurun, who rides through the heavens to your
help, through the skies in his majesty.*

God rides through *Shamayim* (skies).

Psalm 68:33 says:

(Yahweh) ... who rides in the heavens, the ancient heavens

Again God is shown as present in the physical world along humans and he used to fly through *Shamayim* (skies). Ancient Skies or Heavens in Hebrew are *Qedem Shamayim*.

Psalm 104:3 says about God that:

¹ Prophet Solomon had ousted High Priest Abi Athar from Jerusalem and confined him in Anathoth. Later prophets from Anathoth like Jeremiah and Ezekiel had erupted bitter harangue in their books, against Solomon's family ruling Jerusalem and denounced Temple priesthood.

CHAPTER 1. EZEKIEL IN BABYLON

he makes the clouds his chariot; he rides on the wings of the wind;

Chariot in this verse is “Rekhuv” and God’s chariot is cloud (’Av).

Isaiah 19 says that:

Behold Lord is riding a swift cloud

Words in Hebrew Isaiah 19 are *rakhav*² (ridding) *Qal* (swift) *’Av* (cloud).

Daniel 7:9-13 explains that he saw a vision of heavenly council in which the matters of Creation were presented. Angels were present on rows and God Almighty was on His fiery Throne:

I beheld till thrones were placed, and one that was ancient of days did sit: his raiment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames, and the wheels thereof burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousands of thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgement was set, and the books were opened.

Then in verse 13 Daniel says:

I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.

Here words are *Anan Shamayim* (Clouds of Heavens) came a *Bar ’enash* (son of man) who presented to *Attig Yom* (Ancient of days). Now the matter is quite clear God is Ancient of days and there is a mysterious figure *Bar ’enash* who is like a second God descended to Earthen clouds and bring back the news to God the creator in Heavens.

Ezekiel vision gave impetus to mystics to seek the information of divine realm through meditation. The goal of mystics was to see the Throne of God and learn the secrets which are not vivid to every reader of the the holy text³.

² In Arabic *Rakab* is ridding both Semitic words have same root

³ It is interesting to know that Islamic mystical practices Meditation which is called *Muraqaba*. There are different levels (*Manazil*) in *Muraqabah*. At the zenith of this procedure the person experiences the *Tajalli-e-Dhaat* of God or in other words he would see God Almighty. Conceptually the goal of *Markabah Mysticism* and *Muraqbah* is same.

Chapter 2

Ali in Babylon

Āli rides on Al-Sa'b and traversed the seven Earths
- Imam Abi Jafar (The Fifth Imam)

ABDALLĀH bin Sabā¹ was a Jewish mystic from Yemen. He came to Hijaz in era of Uthman and he claimed himself to be Muslim. He stayed in Hijaz then moved to Iraq and Egypt. The information about him are brief. Tabari is the first hisotrian who has written his account on the authority of Saif ibn Umer².

Al-Shahiristani wrote³:

*Al-Sabaiyyah: The people of Abdallāh ibn Sabā ; one who said to Āli
may Allah has Mercy on his face: You are You means you are god; so Ali*

¹ Abdallāh ibn Sabā is not an imaginary person as some have claimed: In Shiite sources: Notable Shiite scholar, Abu Umar Muhammad bin Umar bin Abd al-Aziz al-Kashi (d. 340 AH) reported a narration in Rijal Al-Kashi: From Abi Ja'far that Abdallāh ibn Sabā used to claim prophet-hood and used to claim that Amir al-Momineen (Ali) is Allah, Exalted is He from that. This reached Amir al-Momineen (Ali) who summoned him and asked him (about it) so he (Ibn Sabā) affirmed it and said, "Yes, you are Him, and it had been entered into my soul that you are Allah and that I am a prophet". So Ali said to him, "Woe to you, the devils have mocked you, so recant from this, may your mother be bereaved of you, and repent". But he refused, so he was imprisoned and asked to repent over three days. He never repented and was burned with fire. And he (Abi Ja'far, the narrator) said, "Shaytan had beguiled him, he used to come to him (Ibn Sabā) and would put that (idea) into his soul". In Sunni sources: Ibn Hajar has reported, with several different chains (asnad) without Saif bin Umer, and proved that Ibn Sabā is a real person. (see Lisan Al-Meezan, juz 2, pg40). Notable Shiite narrators like Al-Kalbi and Jabir bin Yazid Al-Joufi also claimed that they are follower of Abdulah bin Saba (Al-Majroheen by Ibn-Habban, Tahzeeb ul Kamal).

² Saif bin Umer (d. 200 AH) was from Banu Tamim and was considered weak in hadith literature but in history his accounts were accepted. Dahabi has quoted his narrations in Seer Al-Allam al-Nubla and Ibn Al-Atheer quoted him in Usd Al-Ghabah. Ibn Hajar said in Tahzeeb Al-Tahzeeb **ضعيف في الحديث. عمدة في التاريخ** "Weak in hadith but good in History". Saif bin Umer is not alone in mentioning Abdallāh ibn Sabā there are more than twenty narrators of hadith (all authentic among Shiites) who had mentioned Abdallāh ibn Sabā and claimed themselves to belong to Al-Sabiyyah sect. There are some opinions among western scholars on the histrocity of Ibn Sabā for details see Note N3

³ See Note [N1] Al-Mallal-wan-Nahal, pg 50 about the deviated sects of Islam

CHAPTER 2. ALI IN BABYLON

deported him to Al-Madain. These people claim that he (Ibn Saba) was Jew then accepted Islam. He said that Yusha bin Nun was the successor of Moses and similarly he called for Ali may Allah pleased with him. And he (Ibn Saba) is the first one, who spread the statement for evidence of Immamate of Ali. And to him are many Ghulat sects are associated. They thought that Ali is alive and has not died; and in him were the Divine parts, and it is not allowed to him to reveal those; and he (Ali) floats with clouds and lightening is his voice and flash is his smile and he would descend to Earth after that; and would fill the earth with justice as it is filled will oppression. And Ibn Saba appeared with this description after the demise of Ali may Allah be pleased with him; and with him (Ibn Saba) gathered a group and this was the first sect which holds the believes of Tawaquf⁴, Ghybata⁵ and Rijah⁶. And they hold the concept of transmigration of Divine parts into their Imams (leaders) after Ali.

Ibn-Atheer wrote⁷:

Abdullah bin Saba was Jew from Sana (Yemen), his mother was black and he accepted Islam in reign of Uthman. Then he shifted to Hijaz then to Basra, then to Kufa and then to Syria. He intended to make people astray (from Islam) but had not accomplished this. Then people of Syria deported him, he arrived at Egypt and stayed there and said to them: Strange it is when you say that Jesus would return, and deny that Muhammad would return and made (the concept of) Riya (returning) for them, and they accepted that. Then he said: For every Prophet there was (a successor) Wasi and Ali is Wasi of Muhammad, so most tyrant is the person who had not acted on the will of Prophet, peace be upon him. And he claimed that Uthman has taken over (the caliphate) without the right, so rise up in this matter and start denouncing your rulers ...

Ibn Saba believed that Āli was:

- An Imam and the successor of Muhammad
- He is alive and not died
- He rides clouds; Lightening is his voice and flash is his smile
- He will return to World

in Torah it is stated that when Moses saw Allah in the burning bush he asked what shall I say to Pharaoh? Who you are? God said (Exodus 3:14):

⁴ No exodus against Governments until a proper moment arrives.

⁵ Hiding of Imam due to enemies

⁶ The Returning of souls before End of the World to punish enemies

⁷ al-Kamil fil Tareekh, juz 2, pg 8. See Note [N2]

Then Moses said to God, “If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, The God of your fathers has sent me to you, and they ask me, What is his name? what shall I say to them?”

God said to Moses, “*eHayah ashur eHayah*” And he said, Say this to the people of Israel, HE who is, has sent me to you

Words in Hebrew Bible אֲנִי אֶשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה pronounced as 'ehyeh 'asher 'ehyeh are generally translated as “I am what I am”. In Arabic Bible translated as أنا هو الذى هو. Al-Mutahar Al-Maqdisi wrote⁸:

وقول اليهود بالعبرانية ايلوهم ادناي اهايا شراها ومعنى ايلوهم الله
And Jews called in Hebrew (names) Elohim, Adoni, ehya ashur ehya and meaning of Elohim (is) Allah

Ibn Manzoor quoted Al-Saghani that:

And that is the name in names of Allah Almighty and meaning of eHayah ashur eHayah is that My Eternalness would not fall and similarly indicated that to me a sage in sages of Jews from Adan , the meaning of eHayah ashur eHayah is Ever Living Ever Sustainer in Hebrew.

For ancient Arabian Jewry God's name was *eHayah ashur eHayah*. And as God said to Moses “I am what I am”, Ibn Saba replied to God in front (Āli) “You are You”. Āli immediately recognized the vocabulary borrowed from Exodus and Ibn Saba was expelled from Kufa. Ibn Saba association of Ali with lightening, clouds and flashes is actually the symbiosis of Ali with the Ezekiel's *Bar enash* on *Merkabah*. He too appeared in clouds with flashes and lightening.

Āli in Hebrew is עֲלִי which is translated in Hebrew as “Me or I” so Arabian speaking Yemenite heretic Jewish sect took this as sign from God. God said to Moses “I am” so Āli is the hidden God appearing in cloak of human flesh. He was the Most Exalted and should be the real leader (*Imam*).

The heretic sect of Ibn Sabā weaved the Jewish mystical ideas around Āli. According to Al-Jahiz⁹ there were people who used to say greetings to Āli whenever they see clouds. One narrator of traditions Abu Jabir Al-Hadrami was an Egyptian and he was holding the doctrine of Āli travelling in clouds¹⁰

ومن قوم إذا ذكروا عليا يردون السلام على السحاب

And there are people, when mentioned Ali
They returned greetings to Cloud

⁸ Al-Bida wal Tahrikh, pg 14

⁹ See Al-Bayan by Al-Jahiz

¹⁰ Meezan Al-Atedal by Al-Dahabi

ولا أقول علي في السحاب لقد أقول فيه إذا جورا وعدوانا

Al-Dahabi quoted Ibn-Mubarak:

*And I do not claim that Āli is in clouds, indeed
If I say it, I commit a grave transgression*

Muslim has reported in his Sahih:

وَحَدَّثَنِي سَلَمَةُ بْنُ شَبِيبٍ، حَدَّثَنَا الْحُمَيْدِيُّ، حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ، قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ رَجُلًا سَأَلَ جَابِرًا عَنْ قَوْلِهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ
فَلَنْ أَتْرَحَ الْأَرْضَ حَتَّى يَأْذَنَ لِي أَبِي أَوْ يَحْكُمَ اللَّهُ لِي وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الْحَاكِمِينَ يَوْسُفُ: فَقَالَ جَابِرٌ لَمْ يَحِجْ تَأْوِيلُ
هَذِهِ، قَالَ سُفْيَانُ: وَكَذَبَ، فَقُلْنَا لِسُفْيَانَ: وَمَا أَرَادَ بِهَذَا؟ فَقَالَ: إِنَّ الرَّافِضَةَ تَقُولُ: إِنَّ عَلِيًّا فِي السَّحَابِ، فَلَا
تَخْرُجُ مَعَهُ مَنْ خَرَجَ مِنْ وَلَدِهِ حَتَّى يَنَادِيَ مُنَادٍ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ يُرِيدُ عَلِيًّا أَنَّهُ يَنَادِي أَخْرُجُوا مَعَ فَلَانٍ، يَقُولُ جَابِرٌ
فَذَا تَأْوِيلُ هَذِهِ الْآيَةِ، وَكَذَبَ، كَانَتْ فِي إِخْوَةِ يُوسُفَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

Sufyan said I heard a person asking Jabir bin Yazid about (verse of Quran Yusuf 80) "So I will never leave [this] land until my father permits me or Allah decides for me, and He is the best of judges." Jabir said: "The Taweel of it is not achieved". Sufyan said: "He lied". We asked: "How?". Sufyan said: "What did he mean by it?". Sufyan said: "Rawafid used to say that Āli is in cloud and he will not come out until it is announced from Heavens¹¹ for one from his family ..."

Abu Jafar Muhammad bin Al-Hasan bin Farookh Al-Saffar (d. 290 AH) was the follower of Imam Hasan Al-Askari. He quoted the words of Imam Hasan Al-Askari ¹²:

حدثنا أحمد بن محمد عن الحسين بن سعيد عن عثمان بن عيسى عن سماعة بن مهران عن أبي بصير عن أبي جعفر عليه السلام أنه قال إن عليا عليه السلام ملك ما في الأرض وما في تحتها فعرضت له السحابان الصعب والذللول فاختر الصعب وكان في الصعب ملك ما تحت الأرض وفي الذلول ملك ما فوق الأرض واختر الصعب على الذلول فدارت به سبع أرضين فوجد ثلث خراب وأربع عوامر

Abi Baseer narrated from Ibi Jafar: "Indeed Āli posses all in heavens and Earth and what is in the core of Earth. He had been presented with two clouds one Al-Sa'ab and one Al-dalol. Āli selected Al-Sa'ab over Al-dalol and through it he roam in seven Earths and he found three devastated and four inhabitable"

¹¹ Bat Qol in Judaism or heavenly Voice

¹² Basair Al-Darjat by Muhammad bin Hasan Al-Sifar

One of the reason to believe that Āli had not died is that his grave location is unknown. It is said that Āli asked his son Hasan to bury him at a secret place which only he knew¹³. It is said in Kitab al-Irshad by Shaykh al-Mufeed that during Abbasid era, in year 175 A.H. (791 A.D.), Abbasid Caliph Harun Al-Rasheed (from family of Abbas, uncle of Āli) went to Najaf, Iraq for hunting in marshes with hunting dogs. During this they reached a location where dogs denied to go further and prostrated. Courtiers of Caliph inferred from this the secret location of Āli 's grave and Caliph ordered the construction of a Shrine over that site.

According to Philo "Questions and Answers on Genesis and Exodus"¹⁴:

The first prophet, too, had obtained this gift, for nobody knew his grave; and once again, another one, Elijah, followed upward the divine countenance, which appeared then or, to say more appropriately and exactly, ascended from among those on the earth to heaven.

As Āli 's grave is not known he is more like Moses and Elijah.

¹³ Sunni Scholar Ibn Kathir rejected this view calling it irrational and against Islamic law. However Ibn-Kathir failed to give any other contrary report related to it. It is even said that the presently known location of Āli 's grave is actually a grave of his rival Mughaira bin Shoaba. See Tareekh al-Baghdad, Vol-I, pp 32-38. According to another legend Hasan placed Āli 's body in an Ark and loaded it on Camel and left it in desert. But Tribe of Tai stopped the camel while it was passing by their region and they opened the Ark and buried Āli in their region. There is also an alleged grave of Ali in Mazar Sharif, Afghanistan (Ancient Khurasan). At beginning of 12th century a local Khurasani claimed that he came to know through his dream that Ali is buried at this location.

¹⁴ See Outside the Bible: Ancient Jewish Writings Related to Scripture by Louis H. Feldman, James L. Kugel, Lawrence H. Schiffman, University of Nebraska Press as a Jewish Publication Society publication, 2013

CHAPTER 2. ALI IN BABYLON

NOTES

[N1] Al-Shahiristani wrote in Al-Mallal wa Al-Nahil:

السبائية أصحاب عبد الله بن سبأ؛ الذي قال لعلي كرم الله وجهه: أنت أنت يعني: أنت الإله؛ فنفاه إلى المدائن. زعموا: أنه كان يهودياً فأسلم؛ وكان في اليهودية يقول في يوشع بن نون وصي موسى عليهما السلام مثل ما قال في علي رضي الله عنه. وهو أول من أظهر القول بالنص بإمامة علي رضي الله عنه. ومنه انشعبت أصناف الغلاة. زعم أن علياً حي لم تمت؛ ففيه الجزء الإلهي؛ ولا يجوز أن يستولي عليه، وهو الذي يحيى في السحاب، والرعد صوته، والبرق تبسمه؛ وأنه سينزل إلى الأرض بعد ذلك؛ فيملاً الأرض عدلاً كما ملئت جوراً. وإنما أظهر ابن سبأ هذه المقالة بعد انتقال علي رضي الله عنه، واجتمعت عليه جماعة، وهو أول فرقة فالت بالتوقف، والغيبة، والرجعة؛ وقالت بتناسخ الجزء الإلهي في الأئمة بعد علي رضي الله عنه.

[N2] Ibn-Atheer wrote in al-Kamil fil Tareekh, juz 2, pg 8:

أن عبد الله بن سبأ كان يهودياً من أهل صنعاء أمه سوداء، وأسلم أيام عثمان، ثم تنقل في الحجاز ثم بالبصرة ثم بالكوفة ثم بالشام يريد إضلال الناس فلم يقدر منهم على ذلك، فأخرجه أهل الشام، فأقواهم فقام فيهم وقال لهم: العجب ممن يصدق أن عيسى يرجع، ويكذب أن محمداً يرجع، فوضع لهم الرجعة، فقبلت منه، ثم قال لهم بعد ذلك: إنه كان لكل نبي وصي، وعلي وصي محمد، فمن أظلم ممن لم يحز وصية رسول الله، صلى الله عليه وسلم، ووثب على وصيه، وإن عثمان أخذها بغير حق، فانهضوا في هذا الأمر وايدأوا بالطعن على أمرائكم ...

[N3] Julius Wellhausen though rejected Saif bin Umer accounts but he accepted the Jewish influence on Proto-Shiitism. (See Die religiös-politischen Oppositionparteien im alten Islam, Abhandlungen der königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Philologische-Historische Klasse, V/2 (Berlin, 1901)). Wellhausen accepted the existence of sect such as Kessaniyah and Mukhtariyah. Montgomery Watt rejects completely the historical role of Abdallāh ibn Sabā. Montgomery wrote: " it is suspicious that no one is named as belonging to the sect except Abdallāh ibn Sabā " (See W. M. Watt, The Formative Period of Islamic Thought (Edinburgh, 1973), 60.). However to prove that he is wrong in his assessment, list of people who were claimed to be belonging to this sect is given.

Chapter 3

Adam Kadmon in Arabia

*God created Adam on His Image*¹
- Book of Genesis
- Sahih Bukhari
- Usul Al-Kafi

ADAM Kadmon is a Jewish mystical phrase means original Adam (primordial man). Adam Kadmon² is a paradox of Human and Divine attributes. In Jewish mysticism, Adam Kadmon, is the first being to emerge from the Godhead. Philo Judeas discussed this idea that the heavenly man is the perfect image of the Logos. R. Akiba said (quoted in Talmud):

How favoured is man, seeing that he was created in the image! as it is said,
For in the image, אֱלֹהִים made man (Genesis 9:6)

An important Jewish mystical text is *Shir Qoma*. The majority of the text is recorded in the form of sayings or teachings that the angel Metatron[N1] revealed to the Rabbi Yishmael who transmitted it to his students and his contemporary Rabbi Akiba. Shir Qomah record, in anthropomorphic terms, the secret names and precise measurements of God's corporeal limbs and parts. The book state that:

Everyone who knows the measure of the Creator is sure to be a son of the World to Come, and will be saved from the punishment of Gehinnom, and from all kind of punishments and evil decrees about to befall the world, and will be saved from all kind of witchcraft, for He saves us, protects us, redeems us, and rescues me from all evil things, from all harsh decrees, and from all kinds of punishments for the sake of His Great Name. Shiur Qomah 1:2

According to Shiite tradition, birth of Āli in Kabba is a mystical event. In Shiite traditions Āli is an embodiment of the essence of God. He was created from the very

¹ Genesis 9:6 ;Usul al-Kafi, Chapter on soul; Shaiih Bukhari, Chapter start of Creation

² The term "Adam Kadmon" is anachronistically applied on Āli as it is first found in *Sod Yediat ha-Meziut*, an early 13th-century kabbalistic treatise. However the theme was present among Jewish mystic from very old times.

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essence of God- the light³. Mulla Baqar reported that Anas said⁴:

When Allah willed to create His Creation He split my light and created the throne from it. So throne is from my light and my light is from Allah and my light is superior to the throne. Then Allah split the light of my brother Ali and created angels from it. Thus angels are from the light of Ali and Ali's light is from Allah and superior to angels. Allah then split the light of my daughter Fatima and created the skies and earth from it. Thus, the skies and the earth are created from her light and her light is from Allah and superior to the skies and the earth. Allah then split the light of my son Hasan and created sun and moon from it. Therefore the sun and the moon are from the light of Hasan and his light is from Allah and is superior to the sun and the moon. Allah then split the light of my son Husain and created paradise and its fairies (Hoor al-Een) from it. So paradise and its fairies are from the light of Husain and his light is from Allah and superior to the paradise and its fairies.

Also reported by Mulla Baqar that Prophet was first creation even before Adam⁵:

O Jabir, (in the beginning) Allah and none else existed. There was neither a known thing nor an unknown thing. Allah created Muhammad before anyone else and with him He created us with His great light. We were before Him in shades of green light. Neither sky existed nor earth, neither place nor night, neither sun nor moon. Our light was illuminated by Him in the same manner as the rays of the sun are illuminated by the Sun. We were glorifying and praising Allah and busy worshipping Him all the time. Then Allah initiated the creation by bringing creatures into existence. He created place and wrote on it: There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the messenger of Allah, Ali is the chief of the believers and his successor, and I helped and supported him through Ali. Allah then created the throne and wrote the same on it. He then created the skies and wrote the same on it. He then created the heaven and the hell and wrote the same on them. Allah then created the angels and placed them in the skies; Allah then created the air and inscribed the same on it. Allah then created the Jinn and made them inhabit the air. Then Allah created the earth and wrote the same on it. Due to these words the skies stand firm without pillars, and the earth remains secure. Allah then created Adam from the soil of the earth. We therefore are the first creation of Allah and first among the creation to worship and glorify Him. We are the cause of the creation and the source of glorification and worship for angels and men.

³ The Divine Guide in Early Shi'ism: The Sources of Esotericism in Islam By Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi, state University of New York, 1994

⁴ Light is God's creation but some deviant Sunni sects and Shiite believe that God is made up of light. See Behaarul Anwaar Vol 57, Pg 191,193, Hadith 139

⁵ Behaarul Anwaar Vol 57, Pg 169, Hadith 112

Āli is called as primordial man who was created from the Light of God. Āli was created in the same step as that of Prophet.

In Muslim History a heretic named Mughaira bin Saeed (d. 119 AH) appeared in Iraq. He was a pseudo-religious political person. Ibn-Hazam wrote in Al-Mallal wan Nahal:

.. He used to live in Kufa. He was burned alive on the orders of Khalid bin Abdullah. He used to say that his Lord is a young man (Naodhubillah) and his body parts are as many as letters of Al-Abjad i.e. Arabic Alphabets[N3]. The famous liar and weak narrator Jabir bin Yazid Al-Joufi was the apostle of Mughaira after his death. Mughaira instructed his followers that now leader of Shiites is Muhammad bin Abdullah bin Hasan bin Ali bin Abi Talib i.e. grandson of Hasan may Allah pleased with him. Mughaira claimed that angels Gabriel and Michael have given oath of allegiance to Muhammad bin Abdullah between Maqam-Ibrahim and Rukun (part of Kabbah)⁶. He introduced the principal of Taweel⁷ of Quran. He claimed that in Quran, Adel (Justice) means Ali, Ahsan means Fatimah, Zawil-Qurbah means Hasan and Hussain and Fahsha wal Munker means Abu Bakr and Umer⁸.

In Quran (27:82), there is a verse:

And when Words (are about to) fulfill, We shall bring forth a creature out of the earth, which will speak with them, Indeed these people had no faith in our signs

Shiites claimed that creature of Earth is Āli. Ibn Asakir⁹:

Imam Jafar reported from forefathers they from Jabir that as soon as Āli started his speech, Abdallāh ibn Sabā said you are the Dabatul Ard (Creature of Earth). Āli said to him: "Fear God!". Then Ibn Sabā said: "You are Melek (The King). You are the one who created the creation and look after their nourishment". Āli ordered his death but all Rawafid (Extremist Shiites) gathered and said expel him towards Al-Madain. ... Āli burned the most extremest among those who were eleven in number and said that I am Āli ibn Abi Talib ... if you do not detest from this I will burn you in flames. And they said will not leave it, so he burned them and their eleven graves in desert are famous. ... those who were left and had not raised their heads said that we knew that Āli was God (incarnated) and took evidence from the words of Ibn Abbas that No one torments with fire except the Creator (God) of fire.

⁶ Maqallat Al-Islamiyeen by Abul Hasan Al-Ashari

⁷ Taweel is a procedure to assign different meaning to a word then its original one.

⁸ According to Dareer bin Abdullah, Doafa Dar-Qutani

⁹ See Note N3

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Bayan bin Samaan Al-Tamimi¹⁰ (d 119 AH) preached the existence of two powers in heavens. The God The Eternal (al-Elah al-Ezali), being in heaven and made up of pure light, and the second one on Earth, probably the creator of the world¹¹.

¹⁰He was burned alive in Kufa on the orders of Ummayyad governor Khalid Al-Qasiri

¹¹See Maqalat Al-Islamiyyeen by Imam Al-Ashari

NOTES

[N1] Metatron is an angel, appeared in Jewish mystical and Islamic magical texts like Book Al-Ajnas attributed to Asaph ben Bereachiah.

[N2] Rabbi Yishmael lived before the birth of Prophet Muhammad. That shows that this text is very ancient. [N3] See the book Shir Qomah, an ancient text in which explains how Hebrew alphabets are representing the body of God Almighty.

[N3] Ibn Asakir reported in Tareekh al-Damishq Vol-29, pg 9:

عن الصادق عن آبائه الطاهرين عن جابر قال لما بويغ علي خطب الناس فقام إليه عبد الله بن سبأ فقال له أنت دابة الأرض قال فقال له اتق الله فقال له أنت الملك فقال له اتق الله فقال له أنت خلقت الخلق وبسطت الرزق فأمر بقتله فاجتمعت الرافضة فقالت دعه وأنفه إلى ساباط المدائن فإنك إن قتلت بالمدينة خرجت أصحابه علينا وشيعته فنفاه إلى ساباط المدائن قال ثم قامت إليه طائفة وهم السسيية وكانوا أحد عشر رجلا فقال ارجعوا فإني علي بن أبي طالب أبي مشهور وأمي مشهورة وأنا ابن عم محمد (صلى الله عليه وسلم) فقالوا لا نرجع دعيك فأحرقهم بالنار وقبروهم في صحراء أحد عشر مشهورة فقال من بقي ممن لم يكشف رأسه منهم علمنا إنه إله واحتجوا بقول ابن عباس لا يعذب بالنار إلا خالقها

[N4] Abdallāh ibn Sabā was from Yemen. According to Tabari the last Jewish ruler Dhu Nuwas after suspecting defeat against Kingdom of Aksum in 525, “he directed his horse towards the sea, then, spurring it on, rode through shallow water till he reached the depth and finally threw himself with his horse into it; this is the last that was known of him” (Tareekh Al-Tabari). Dhu Nawas committed suicide but probably according to his followers he went into osculation and would return back. Beer suggests that the Jews of Arabia looked upon Dhu-Nuwas as a Messianic figure (See Beer, ZDMG., IX (1855), Quoted in Shiitic Elements in Jewish Sectarianism by Israel Friedlaender, Jewish Quarterly Review, Vol III, No2, 1012, pp 235 - 300, 1910).

CHAPTER 3. ADAM KADMON IN ARABIA

Chapter 4

Elijah in Arabia

*Look, I am sending you the prophet Elijah before
the great and dreadful day of the LORD arrives*
- Malachi (4:5)

ELIJAH was a biblical Prophet who lived in the Northern Kingdom called Israel during the reign of Ahab (9th century BC)¹. From verses of Malachi, Jew inferred that Elijah will be the harbinger of the Messiah. The dreadful day will be established by Messiah.

Asbag bin Nubata from Bani Tamim was among the gaurds of Āli, but a deviant extremist ². It is reported in Mukhtassar by Hasan bin Sulaiman³:

قال حدثنا الحسين بن أحمد : عن محمد بن عيسى ، عن يونس بن عبد الرحمان ، عن سماعة بن مهران ، عن الفضل بن الزبير ، عن الأصمغ بن نباتة قال قال لي معاوية يا معاشر الشيعة ، تزعمون أن عليا عليه السلام دابة الأرض ؟ فقلت نعم نحن نقوله واليهود يقولون . قال فأرسل إلى رأس الجالوت ، فقال له ويحك تجدون دابة الأرض عندكم مكتوبة ؟ فقال : نعم ، فقال : ما هي ؟ فقال رجل ، فقال أتدري ما اسمه ؟ قال : نعم ، اسمه إيليا . قال : فالتفت إلي ، فقال : ويحك يا اصمغ ما أقرب إيليا من علي

Muawiyah said to me (Asbag bin Nubata)⁴, “O you Shiite! You claim that Āli is the Daba-tul-Ard (Creator of the Earth)!” So I said, “ We say this, and likewise Jews says this.” Then he (Muawiyah) sent for the Jewish leader Jalut, “Damn you! Do you know of the Creature of Earth among your people?” Jew’s leader said: “Yes”. Muawiyah asked: “What is it; do you know its name ?” Jew’s leader said: “ His name is Iliya (i.e. Elijah)”. Muawiyah replied: “Damn you, Asbagh! How close Iliya is to Aliya”

Elijah אליהו in Arabic called Ilyas. According to the Bible, Elijah was ascended to heaven without dying. In Book 2 Kings 2:11 it is said that: “Suddenly a chariot of

¹ according to the biblical Books of Kings.

² Sunni Scholar of tradition consider him Matrook

³ Mukhtasar Basair Al-Darajat by Hasan bin Sulaiman Al-Hilli, Qom, 2000. Book Al-Aiqaz min Al-Hajata by al-Amili pg 384

⁴ Proto-shiite from Yemen settled in Kufa

CHAPTER 4. ELIJAH IN ARABIA

fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind.” In book of Malachi there are also prophecies of Elijah’s return (Malachi 4:5-6):

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes.

According to Quran Eliyas (Elijah) (إلييا) too ascended to heavens. According to Book of 1 Kings, Elijah was fed by ravens when in hiding (1King, 17: 6), he parted river Jordan (2Kings, 2:8) and raised a widow’s dead son alive (1King, 17: 21-22), was raised to the heaven alive on a fiery chariot. Ibn Sabā used such concepts to prove that Āli can return as well. Also in Quran it is said⁵:

ورفعناه مكاناً علياً

He (Elijah) was raised to Lofty place (Ali-ya)

Ghulat perhaps did their *Taweel* interpretation and converted Elijah into Āli as in verse of Quran Elijah is raised to lofty place and they took the word عليا *Aliya* as a hint for promoting Elijah to transform into Āli .

Shiite scholar Sheikh Saduq quoted the words of Prophet that Idris was Enoch⁶. Enoch was the first who used pen⁷.

Tibrisi reported that one Christian monk spoke with Abu Bakr and then was not satisfied until Salman the Persian asked Āli to come to mosque and answer the monk. When monk heard Āli ’s wisdom, he immediately recognized his true identity and said⁸:

لقد قرأت اسمك في التوراة إلیا ، وفي الإنجيل إلییا ، وفي القرآن عليا ، وفي الكتب السابقة حیدرة

Indeed I read your name in Torah Alya, in Gospel as Aliya (Elijah) and in Quran as (Aliya) and in previous books as Hydera

Ibn Shahr Ashoob repoted⁹:

Musa bin Akeel Alnmari reported that we reached at the door of Imam Abi Jafar and asked for permission to enter. Then we heard a weeping voice praying in Hebrew. So we entered inside house and asked him what he was reciting. He said he recited Elijah prayer and wept during recitation.

Elijah prayer is reported in Book of 1 Kings 18:36-37:

O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel, and that I am your servant, and that I have done

⁵ surah Maryam verse 56

⁶ Al-Khisaal by Sheikh Saduq, Vol-2, pp 524, Al-Kamil fil Tareekh by Ibn Atheer, Al-Bidaya wa Al-Nihayah by Ibn Katheer

⁷ Kitab Al-Ikhtesas by Sheikh Mufeed (d. 413 AH)

⁸ Al-Ahtejaaj by Al-Tibrisi, Vol-I, pg 308

⁹ Manaqib Aal Abi Talib by Ibn Shahr Ashoob (d. 588 AH)

all these things at your word. Answer me, O LORD, answer me, that this people may know that you, O LORD, are God, and that you have turned their hearts back.

Ali also knew the secret location of Staff of Moses. According to Al-Majlisi Prophet informed Zayd bin Sohan¹⁰:

انكم تفتحون رومية ، فإذا فتحتم كنيسة الشرق فاجعلوها مسجدا ، وعدوا سبع بلاطات ثم ارفعوا البلاطة الثامنة فإنكم تجدون تحتها عصا موسى وكسوة إيليا

You will conquer the Romans, so when you subdue them take the Eastern Church (or Synagogue) as a mosque and count seven slabs (on floor), and raised the eight slab you will find there the staff of Moses and the cloak of Elijah

According to Al-Majlisi, Prophet Muhammad informed Ali on the day of battle of Khaibar¹¹:

واعلم يا علي إنهم يجدون في كتابهم أن الذي يدمر عليهم اسمه إيليا ، فإذا لقيتهم فقل : أنا علي ، فإنهم يخذلون إنشاء الله

O Ali, they have found in their book that Elijah would destroy them. So when you met them say: "I am Ali " they will be humiliated God willing

Fusion of Ali with biblical prophet Elijah is a unique understanding in Shiite literature. Ali was presented as incarnation of Elijah.

Recent discovery of Dead Sea Scrolls reveal that Jews believed in the concept of two Messiahs. One with priestly role and another one acting like a king. Priestly Messiah would appear before the kingly Messiah. Ghulat had similar kind of belief. Ali has been given the role of a divinely ordained High Priest (or Imam) as happened in Jewish history when Aaron was appointed by God as a High Priest in life time of Moses and Moses asked him to look after Tabernacle (The Divine Tent). Therefore when Prophet Muhammad left for one anticipated battle at Tabuk, he left Ali to look after his household. Ali did not like this and went to Prophet to request him to reconsider his decision, on which Prophet said:

Are you not happy with the status that you are to me, like Aaron was to Moses¹².

This statement from Prophet was considered by Shiites as a sign that God has appointed Ali as Imam (High Priest). Ali after completing his priestly role went back to clouds like Elijah and will return on the day when Bat Qol¹³ will be heard and Ali will return¹⁴.

¹⁰ Bihar Al-Anwar by Mulla Majlisi Vol-18, pp 1111

¹¹ Bihar Al-Anwar, Vol 21, pp 15

¹² Narration considered authentic both among sunni and Shiite circles.

¹³ According to Jews there are three ways God communicate with humans: (1) Revelation through angels (2) Bat Qol (Heavenly Voice); In later Islamic tradition Bat Qol was also heard when Hussain was died at Karbala, Iraq. (3) Urim and Thumim (Stones on High Priest Breast Plate)

¹⁴ This is also according to ancient Jewish apocalyptic text *Sefer Zerubbabel*¹⁵ which says that Messiah son of Joseph (Priest) will die but after him will appear Messiah son of David (King) from his 'hiding' and he would bring Messiah son of Joseph back to life. The cross-pollination of ideas have created the sects of Ghulat.

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Shiites also believe in an end time apocalyptic figure which they call Al-Mahdi. Al-Mahdi will be from the family of Fatimah and Āli and he will appear in Makkah where hordes of Shiites would pay allegiance to him between the Black stone and Station of Abraham. He will then march towards Damascus to destroy the usurper regime over there. The historicity of feud between the Family of Āli and Ummayyad dynasty ruling at Damascus vividly indicate to an unbiased reader the concocted nature of such narrations. The Semitic figure of al-Mahdi is aggrandised by saying that he would rule the Earth according to Law of David. Prophet David was also following the Law of Moses or Torah. However to avoid any stigma of judaizing the Islamic tradition, it is said that Al-Mahdi would rule as per laws of David. Reported in Al-Kafi¹⁶:

When the Imams will Rise with Divine Authority They will Judge among People as David And his People had done that they will not Ask any Witness to Testify (May the peace and Blessings of Allah be up on them)

Also reported in al-Kafi:

Muhammad ibn Yahya has narrated from Ahmad ibn Muhammad from Muhammad ibn Sinan From Aban from abu 'Abdallah (a.s.) who has said the following. "The world will not end before the rise of a man from us who would judge among people the way the family of David had been judging them. He will not ask any witness to testify.

Like Āli, Al-Mahdi would also use the Hebraic Divine Name. Al-Numayni reported¹⁷:

Reported to us Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Saeed al Uqdah who said: It was narrated to us from Ali ibn al-Hasan al-Taymali who narrated to us from al-Hasan and Muhammad the sons of Ali ibnu Yusuf, from Sa'daan ibn Muslim, from Rajaal, from al-Mufadhaal ibn Umar from Abu Abdullah (Jafar al-Sadiq, the sixth Shiite Imam) that: When the Imam Mahdi calls out, he will pray to God in Hebrew.

It was perhaps believed among proto-Shiites that Arabic name of God i.e. Allah is not original. Arabic is reduced in mystical levels. It is reported in Shiite literature that original language that Adam spoke was Arabic but when he committed sin Syriac is given as language¹⁸. According to a statement attributed to Imam Jafar even Hasan and Hussain have names in Hebrew called Shabbar and Shabbeer¹⁹ which were originally names of family of Aaron²⁰. Nevertheless, Āli was like Aaron (High Priest from God) of his age. According to Tafseer Qurtabi, Ammarah, an unknown narrator, narrates from Āli :

¹⁶Kitab Al-Kafi Chapter 99 by Al-Kalyni

¹⁷Al-Numayni, Kitab Al-Ghayba

¹⁸Al-Ikhtesas by Sheikh Mufeed, pp 265

¹⁹Names or titles with obscure meaning.

²⁰Mustadrak Safinah Al-Bihar by Sheikh Āli Al-Nimari. Aaron had four sons, Nadabh (meaning generous), Abihu (meaning he is my father), Eleazer (meaning El has helped), Ithamar (meaning palm tree). It is not clear how the names Hasan (Good) and Hussain (Little beauty) can be related to names of sons of Aaron.

أَبُو بَكْرٍ بْنُ أَبِي شَيْبَةَ: حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ سَعِيدٍ الْقَطَّانُ عَنْ سُفْيَانَ عَنْ أَبِي إِسْحَاقَ عَنْ عُمَارَةَ بْنِ عَبْدِ عَنْ عَلِيٍّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: انْطَلَقَ مُوسَى وَهَارُونُ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمَا وَانْطَلَقَ شَبْرٌ وَشَبِيْمٌ هُمَا ابْنَا هَارُونَ فَاتَّهَمُوا إِلَى جَبَلٍ فِيهِ سَرِيرٌ، فَقَامَ عَلَيْهِ هَارُونُ فَقَبِضَ رُوحَهُ. فَرَجَعَ مُوسَى إِلَى قَوْمِهِ، فَقَالُوا: أَنْتَ قَتَلْتَهُ، حَدَّثَنَا عَلَى لِينِهِ وَعَلَى خُلُقِهِ، أَوْ كَلِمَةٍ نَحْنُوهَا، الشُّكُّ مِنْ سُفْيَانَ، فَقَالَ: كَيْفَ أَقْتُلُهُ وَمَعِيَ ابْنَاهُ! قَالَ: فَاخْتَارُوا مَنْ يَشْتُمُ، فَاخْتَارُوا مِنْ كُلِّ سَبْطٍ عَشْرَةً. قَالَ: فَذَلِكَ قَوْلُهُمَا وَاخْتَارَ مُوسَى قَوْمَهُ سَبْعِينَ رَجُلًا لِمِقَاتِنَا فَاتَّهَمُوا إِلَيْهِ، فَقَالُوا: مَنْ قَتَلَكَ يَا هَارُونُ؟ قَالَ: مَا قَتَلَنِي أَحَدٌ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ تَوَفَّانِي. قَالُوا: يَا مُوسَى، مَا تُغْصَى فَأَحَدْتَهُمُ الرَّجْفَةُ

Amarah bin Abd narrates from Āli that Moses and Aaron went along Shabbar and Shabbir the sons of Aaron and reached the mountain where there was couch. Aaron set on it and there his soul is taken. Moses went back to his people and they said: “You killed due to envy of us”... Moses replied: “How I killed him while his sons are with me! Choose whoever you like, ten out of every tribe”. Narrator said: so this was the meaning of ayah Choose seventy men for meeting with Us (God). So they reached the meeting point and people said: “Who killed you O Aaron?”. Aaron said (miraciously): “No body killed me but I died (naturally)”...So earthquake took them.

In Shiite Literature, it is claimed that Prophet said that Shabbir and Shabbar was written in Torah, when a Jew came and asked some questions²¹:

قال النبي (صلى الله عليه وآله) : فأنشدتك بالله إن أنا أخبرتك تقر لي ؟ قال اليهودي : نعم يا محمد . قال : فقال النبي (صلى الله عليه وآله) : أول ما في التوراة مكتوب محمد رسول الله ، وهي بالعبرانية : طاب ، ثم تلا رسول الله هذه الآية (يجدونه مكتوبا عندهم في التوراة والإنجيل) ، و (مبشرا برسول يأتي من بعدي اسمه أحمد) ، وفي السطر الثاني اسم وصيي علي بن أبي طالب ، والثالث والرابع سبطي الحسن والحسين ، وفي السطر الخامس أمهما فاطمة سيدة نساء العالمين ، وفي التوراة اسم وصيي أليا ، واسم سبطي شبر وشبير ، وهما نورا فاطمة . .

Prophet said: “Swear by God that If I tell you would you confirm that?”. The Jew said: Yes O Muhammad. Prophet said: “In the beginning of Torah it is written Muhammad is apostle of God and it was in Hebrew *Taab*”, then Prophet read verse of Quran: “They found his name written in Torah and Gospel” and read “And I give you tidings that an apostle will come after me with the name Ahmad”. (Prophet continued replying to the Jew) “and in the second row it is written My custodian will be Āli bin Abi Talib and in third and fourth row my son Hasan and Hussain and in fifth row their mother Fatimah, the leader of women of the Worlds, names are written. And in Torah my custodian’s name is Elijah and my sons names are Shabbar and shabbir and they are the light of Fatimah”.

²¹ Reported in Al-Amali by Sheikh Sadooq, pg 258

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Later this Jew confirmed all these statements as facts.

According to Shiite sources the custodianship of religion has shifted from Muhammad to sons of Āli ²²

وكان فتى موسى يوشع ، وفتى محمد علي ، ولا فتى إلا علي . وكان لموسى شبر وشبير ، ولعلي حسن وحسين . وكان ولاية موسى في أولاد هارون ، وولاية محمد في أولاد علي . تركوا هارون وعبدوا العجل عجلا جسدا له خوار ، وتركوا عليا وعبدوا بني أمية

And the protege of Moses was Joshua, and protege of Muhammad is Āli , and there is no protege except Āli . And for Moses was Shabbar and Shabbir, and for Āli Hasan and Hussain. And the custodianship (inheretance) of Moses was with sons of Aaron. But they left Aaron and worshiped calf, as they left Āli and worshiped Bani Umayyah.

In Tafseer Rooh-al-Bayan it is reported that Shabbir and Shabbar died due to wrath of God:

وكان القربان والسرّج في ابني هارون شبر وشبير فامرا ان لا يسرجا بنار الدنيا فاستعجلا يوما فاسرجا بنار الدنيا فوقعت النار فاكلت

And duty of Sacrifices and igniting incense was with sons of Aaron, Shabbar and Shabbir. They were commanded not to use the fire of the world to ignite the incense - but they hurried one day and ignited them with fire of the world, so The Flames consumed them.

Also in Shiite literature it is said that Shabbar and Shabbir sons of Aaron died due to wrath of God²³.

وان شبر وشبير ابني هارون (عليه السلام) قربا قربانا ثم سقياه الخمر وشرباها ووقفا يقربان ، فنزلت النار عليهما وأحرقتهما لأن الخمر في بطونهما فقتلا بذلك

They reached altar and drank wine and offered sacrifices, so a Fire descend from sky and burned them, as wine was still in their bellies, so were killed due to this. And they Shabbar and Shabbir were sons of Aaron

If Shabbar and Shabbir, sons of Aaron killed by the Wrath of God then they both were cursed and according to Prophetic tradition such names should not be given to children. However paradoxically, it is claimed by Hani bin Hani an unknown companion of Āli that Āli told him that originally he wanted to name his sons Harb but Prophet commanded him to call them Shabbar and Shabbir.

According to Book of Leviticus, chapter 10:

²² Manaqib Aal- Abi Talib by Ibn Shahr Ashoob, Vol-III, pg 45

²³ Hidya-tul-Kubra by Hussain bin Hamdan pg 109

Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu took their censers, put fire in them and added incense; and they offered unauthorized fire before the Lord, contrary to his command. So fire came out from the presence of the Lord and consumed them, and they died before the Lord. Moses then said to Aaron, This is what the Lord spoke of when he said: Among those who approach me I will be proved holy; in the sight of all the people I will be honored. Aaron remained silent.

There are many opinions among Jewish sages and rabbis on the possible reason of their death. According Jewish sage Rashi (Shlomo Yitzchaki), Nadab and Abihu died as they entered the Tabernacle while intoxicated and wearing inappropriate clothing. An another interpretation attributed to him says that they chose to use fire from a different source then what originally been commanded. This shows that the interpretation in Islamic tradition that sons of Aaron died due to intoxication came from Jewish sages. Ghulats were the carriers in this case, infecting the Islamic traditions with Jewish motifs.

This shows that Shabbar and Shabbir were a pun on the names of Nadab and Abihu. As Ghulats were linking parallels among Jewish and Islamic personalities, they were expecting that both Hasan and Hussain would eventually die in deflagration in mosque some time.

Chapter 5

Mysteries of Alphabets

I am city of knowledge and Āli is its door
- A weak hadith¹

GREEK thought and philosophy had a huge impact on the religion of Judaism after 334 BCE when Alexander invaded near east. Now the Jewish mystical thoughts are merged with Hellenistic culture and Greek Neo-Platonism. Philo Judeas (30 BCE-45 CE) was the leader of Jewish's community at Alexandria indulged in mystical practices. Jews used the Greek method of Isopsephy[N1] to unlock the mysteries of Cosmos, method called Gematria[N2]. The earliest use of *Gematria*² is attributed to Philo during second Temple period. Al-Dahabi informed that a poet Abi Al-Alla Al-Mari (d. 1057 AD/449 AH) of Abbasid era said³:

*I have been astonished by Ahlul Bayt They showed their knowledge by the
touch of Jafr And the Mirror of Stars, that is small one enough for
everyone settled and in wilderness*

According to Shiite tradition, *Ilm-ul-Jar* is the secret knowledge written on the skin of ram or goat passed on to Ali from Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him. *Ilm-ul-Jar* or *Abjad* is a Muslim adaptation of *Gematria*. It is said that Abjad alphabets are the letters of Great Divine Name⁴.

In Table 4 the *Gematria* and *Abjad* systems are compared. It is important to note the similarity between the Hebrew letter sounds and Arabic letters. In *Abjad* system the number are not assigned as they appear in order instead the number are assigned according to *Gematria*. On the other hand the letter of Hebrew Alphabet are in order as they read in sequence. *Abjad* arrangement and Ilm-ul-Jafr⁵ are thus Arabic adaptation

¹ A concocted narration reported by Ahmed bin Abdullah bin Yazid (See Mustadrak Al-Hakim).
- Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him

² See The Greek Qabalah by Kieren Barry, Weiser Publishers

³ See Al-Tafseer wal- Mufasaroon by al-Dahabi

⁴ Al-Nukat wal Uyyon by al-Mawardi, juz 1, pg 9

⁵ The main difference between Abjad and Ilm-ul-Jafr methods is that the former refers to what has already taken place in past and the later one is about what's likely to take place in the future.

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Table 4: **Abjad System and Gematria**

Num. Hebrew	Arabic	Num Hebrew	Arabic	Num. Hebrew	Arabic
1 א Aleph	ا	10 י yud	ي	100 ק Qoph	ق
2 ב Bet	ب	20 כ Kaph	ك	200 ר Reish	ر
3 ג Gimel	ج	30 ל Lamed	ل	300 ש Shin	ش
4 ד Daled	د	40 מ Mem	م	400 ת Taw	ت
5 ה He	ه	50 נ Nun	ن	500 פ Kaph-f	ث
6 ו Vav	و	60 ס Samech	س	600 ע Mem-f	خ
7 ז Zayin	ز	70 צ Ayin	ع	700 ך Nun-f	ذ
8 ח Het	ح	80 פ Pe	ف	800 ף Pe-f	ض
9 ט Tet	ط	90 צ Tsade	ص	900 ץ Tsade-f	ظ
				1000	غ

of *Gematria* which reveals that it has its origins in Jewish mysticism. In the ancient Jewish text of *Sefer Yezirah*, the letters are related to elements and planets. The purpose is to unlock the mysteries of cosmos using the letters and deciphering them. The author of *Sefer Yetzirah* combined seven letters to make combination corresponding to seven plants known in Hellenistic era. In similar fashion eight letter words were created in Ilm-ul-Jafr. The first word *Abjad* consists of four letter. The second word is *Hawwadh*, consists of three letters. Third one is the three letter word *Hutti*. The fourth word is the four letter *Kaleman*. Fifth word is the four letter *Sfas*. Sixth word is the four letter *Qarashat*. The seventh is the three letter *Thakhhaz* and the eighth is the three letter *Dazagh*.

Tabari has reported that these are the name of days in his Tarikh:

Dahhak bin Mazahim said: Allah has created Heavens and Earth in six days, and the name of the days are Abjad, Hawwadh, Hutti, Kaleman, S'fas and Qarashat.

Ibn-Khuldun writes in his Muqqadmah on how the Abjad letters are used for the extraction of knowledge of future:

And they draw nine words which end with letter Ahad and words are
إيقش، بكر، جلس، دمت، هنت، وصح، زغد، حفظ، طضع

From Table 4 it is clear that the letters in words are actually the combination of letters of Hebrew as arranged in Gematria in a row⁶.

⁶ There are some minor changes but the reason of that is that Ibn-Khuldun heard it from someone.

Shiites had embraced the mystical tradition of Yemenite Jews. So Abdullah ibn Sinan narrated that Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq had mentioned the origin of Ilm Al-Jafr (or Abjad) and candidly accepted the Jewish origin of this knowledge. Abdullah ibn Sinan narrated that Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq said:

*when we mentioned before him the activities of the descendants of Imam al-Hasan and also the al-Jafr: "By Allah I swear; we keep two papers made of skins of goat and sheep. These two papers comprise the dictation of the Messenger of Allah with the handwriting of (Imam) Āli". The Imam remained silent for a while and then said, "With us there is al-Jafr. Do they know what al-Jafr is? " I asked, "What is al-Jafr?" The Imam said, "It is a container made of skin that contains the knowledge of the prophets and the executors of their wills. **It is the knowledge of the scholars in the past from the Israelites**".*

Abul-Hasan Al-Ashari wrote about Mughaira bin Saeed (d. 119 AH)⁷:

The fourth group is Al-Mughairah i.e. those who believed in Mughaira bin Saeed. They thought that Mughaira is apostle and knows Ism-e-Azam (Great Divine Name) also they claimed that their Lord is a Noor (i.e. Light) and looks like a human which tiara on His head. He has limbs like humans and He has belly and heart which gives the Hikmah and He has as many limbs as letters of Huruf Abjad. Aleph with slight inclination corresponds to His foot and for "HA" they claimed that if you have the vision of it, you would have seen a great thing! By this they mean the hidden parts. That cursed one, claimed that he has seen that. He also claimed that he knows Ism-e-Azam by the help of which he could raise the dead. He also claimed that Muhammad peace be upon him is the first creation.

The application of Gematria on Āli name (Ayin-Lamed-'Yud) gives $70 + 30 + 10 = 110$. Also Āli is the name of God and in his birth account the God, Al-Ali Al-Ala spoke with his mother. Application of Gematria on Al-Ala gives the numeral essence as $1+70+30+10=111$ which shows that out of ninety-nine names of Allah, the judicious selection of God's name Al-Ala is done intentionally to bring the similarities close. Āli was claimed to be born inside Kabba a place of high secrets and Fatimh bint Asad remained there for four days.

Hebrew theonym (Hebrew: יהוה) phonetically in Arabic as **ي ه و ه** is called the name of God in Hebrew. $10+5+6+5=26$. As number 5 appear twice in Tetragrammaton, Jews consider that number five has some importance. It not surprising that Shiites too venerated five beings who were created first in the begining of Creation i.e. Muhammad, Āli , Fatimah, Hasan, Hussain.

In Genesis (2:4) God said:

⁷ Maqallat Al-Islamiyeen pg 11

CHAPTER 5. MYSTERIES OF ALPHABETS

This is the history of the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that Yahweh God made earth and the heavens.

The words **when they were created** in Hebrew are BeHebaram. BeHebaram phrase can be divided to say **With Hey ה were they created** , which suggests the importance of the number five in the creation of mankind⁸.

Abjad letters from then onwards become mystical and now widely used in fortune telling, magic and mysticism. Huruf Muqattaa't are the letters of Arabic in a combination appearing in the beginning of some surah of Quran. Their exact meaning is unknown. The second chapter of Quran starts with such letters $\text{الم} = \text{م} \text{ل} \text{ا} = 1+30+40=71$. These numbers are widely used in amulets.

The approach is quite similar to Jewish mystical Gematria system. Jews of Egypt also started using Quran in amulets (See Note N3). Egypt was the hub of mystical speculation from Hermeneutics to Gnosticism and also for Ghulat sects. The source of this knowledge among Shiites was Ali .

⁸ Menachot 29b, Talmud. See The Alef-beit: Jewish Thought Revealed Through the Hebrew Letters by Yitsha Ginzburg, Avraham Arie Trugman, Moshe Yaakov Wisnefsky, pg 395. Gal Einai Publications, 1995

NOTES

[N1] Isopsephy is the Greek word for the practice of adding up the number values of the letters in a word to form a single number.

[N2] Poetry of Abi Al-Alla Al-Mari in Arabic:

لقد عجبوا لأهل البيت لما أروهم علمهم في مسك جفر و امرأة النجم وهى صغرى أرتة كل عامرة وقفر

[N3] Shaul Shaked has also found in Cairo Genizah fragments evidences that Jews in Egypt were using Quran in amulets. See Medieval Jewish Magic in Relation to Islam: Theoretical Attitudes and Genres by Shaul Shaked.

Chapter 6

Shem-ha-Maphorash - The Great Divine Name

He would redeem them with seventy-two letters

- Rabbi Eleazer

... Āli prayed to Allah with His Hebrew name

- Imam Jafar

ACCORDING Jewish mystics *Shem-ha-Maphorash* (שם המפורש) describes a hidden name of God¹. It is also mentioned in *Sepher Raziel Hemelach* ². According to *Sepher Raziel* its is a secret name of God comprising of seventy-two letters. The source of this inspiration are verses 19 to 21 of Book of Exodus:

וַיֵּסַע מִלֶּאֱדָה הָאֱלֹהִים, הַהֹלֵךְ לִפְנֵי מַחֲנֵה יִשְׂרָאֵל, וַיֵּלֶךְ, מֵאַחֲרֵיהֶם; וַיֵּסַע עִמּוֹד הָעֲנָן,
מִפְּנֵיהֶם, וַיַּעֲמֵד, מֵאַחֲרֵיהֶם
וַיָּבֹא בֵּין מַחֲנֵה מִצְרַיִם, וּבֵין מַחֲנֵה יִשְׂרָאֵל, וַיְהִי הָעֲנָן וְהַחֹשֶׁךְ, וַיָּאֵר אֶתְהַלֵּלָהּ; וְלֹא־קָרַב
זֶה אֶל־זֶה, כָּל־הַלַּיְלָה
וַיַּט מֹשֶׁה אֶת־יָדוֹ, עַל־הָעֲנָן, וַיִּזְלַח יְהוָה אֶת־הָרוּחַ בְּרוּחַ קָדִים עָזָה כָּל־הַלַּיְלָה, וַיִּשָּׂם אֶת־הָעֲנָן
לְחֹרֶבָה; וַיִּבָּקְעוּ, הַמַּיִם

Then the angel of God who was going before the host of Israel moved and went behind them, and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them,

Coming between the host of Egypt and the host of Israel. And there was the cloud and the darkness. And it lit up the night without one coming near the other all night.

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the LORD drove the sea back by strong east wind all night and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.

According to Midrash Rabbah on Leviticus (23:2),

R. Abin commented: He redeemed them by His name; for the name of the Holy One, blessed be He, consists of seventy-two letters.

Also reported in Midrash Rabbah Genesis (44:19):

¹ Jewish Encyclopedia, see entry Shem Ha-Meforash; Jewishencyclopedia.com.

² Jewish Magic and Superstition by Joshua Trachtenberg, Behrman's Jewish Book House, 1939.

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R. Eleazar said in R. Jose's name: The Holy One, blessed be He, promised our forefather that He would redeem his children with these two letters³; but if they repented, He would redeem them with seventy-two letters. R. Judan said: In the passage, " [Or hath God assayed] to go and take Him a nation from the midst of another nation, by trials, by signs, and by wonders, and by roar, and by a mighty hand, and by an outstretched arm, and by great terrors" (Deut. IV, 34), You will find seventy-two letters; and should you object, that there are seventy-five, deduct the second 'nation,' which is not to be counted. R. Abin said: He redeemed them by His name, the Name of the Holy One, blessed be He, consisting of seventy-two letters.

Jewish High Priest used to have breastplate called Urim and on that plate there were twelve stones. Each of the stones contains six letters so in total there were seventy-two letters on the breast plate. High Priest used the plate for divination when questions were asked. Seventy-two letters on the gems of the breastplate relate to the usage of the Urim and Thumim. The Urim refers to a light from within the gems of breastplate and the Thumim is the process of the high priest selecting letters from the lightened gems for divination.

Shiites claim that Āli knows the The Great Divine Name. What was that?

Shurays al-Wabishi narrated from Jabir from Abu Ja'far who has said⁴:

The greatest name of Allah has seventy three letters. There was only of these letters. He spoke that one letter and land between him and throne of the Queen of Sheba sunk down as such that he could reach her throne with his hand and the land returned to the original state. This happened in a blinking of (a number of our people has narrated) from eye. Of the greatest name of Allah there are seventy two letters with us. Allah has kept one letter exclusively for Himself in the knowledge of the unseen. There is no means and no power except by the help of Allah, the Most High, the Most Great.

Also in Al-Kafi it is reported that al-Husayn ibn Muhammad al-Ash'ari from Mu'alla ibn Muhammad from Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn 'Abdallah from Ali ibn Muhammad al-Nawfali who has said that he heard abu al-Hassan (a.s.) Sahib al-'Askar said:

The greatest name of Allah has seventy three letters. There was only one letter with Asif (bin Berkhiya). He spoke with it and the land between him and the throne of the Queen of Sheba sunk down as such that he took her throne and placed it before Solomon. The land then came to normal state within less than a blinking of an eye. There are seventy-two of those letters with us. One letter is with Allah which, He has kept it exclusively in the knowledge of the unseen

Ghulat also claimed that Āli was present even among courtiers of King of Solomon and well aware of his secret knowledge. They named him as "Asaph ben Berechiah"⁵

³ The two letters are Dalet and Nun which spell judgement

⁴ Al-Kafi, ch 36

⁵ One of the captive Levites carried off to Assyria (I Chron. vi. 24). It is also claimed that name

Later Shiites also reported that Āli used Hebrew and Syriac words in prayers⁶. Āli and his companions were going through Babylon (Iraq or Turkey) the sun was about to set but Āli opted not to pray there saying its a cursed place and continued his journey till he went out of the cursed land and during this time sun completely disappeared from Horizon. Āli now ordered his companions to prepare the evening prayers and he started whispering a prayer in Hebrew or Syriac and sun began to appear back (i.e. time started moving backward). Āli's companion Juwariya asked about the secret prayer so Āli informed him that he used Great Divine name of God.

Shiites also quoted this⁷:

*Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Sa'eed bin Oqda narrated from Ali bin al-Hasan at-Taymali from al-Hasan and Muhammad, the sons of Ali bin Yousuf, from Sa'dan bin Muslim from a man that al-Mufadhdhal bin Umar had said: Abu Abdullah as-Sadiq (s) said: When the Imam (al-Mahdi) calls out the azan, **he will pray to Allah with His Hebrew name** and then his companions, who will be three hundred and thirteen men, will be permitted to join him. They will gather like the cloudlets of autumn. They will be the bearers of the banners. Some of them will be missed in their beds in the night and in the morning they will find themselves in Mecca. Some of them will be seen walking on the clouds during the day. They will be known by their names, their fathers' names and their lineage. I said: "May I die for you! Which of them is greater in faith? He said: It is those, who walk on the clouds during the day. They are the missed ones. About these companions Allah has revealed this verse, 'Wherever you are, Allah will bring you all together.*

Name of God is not comprised of four letters (like Yahweh) or four letters (like Allah) but it is a long name like a phrase. Al-Saffar reported in Basair Al-Darjat that Umar bin Hanzalah a disciple of Imam Baqir asked him to teach him the the Great Divine Name. Imam Baqir said: Can you stand it? Hanzalah answered affirmatively. Imam and Hanzalah entered the chamber and Imam placed his hand on Earth as as he started saying the Holy Name Earth started trembling and plunged into great darkness and Umar started to tremble as well and heard the first part of phrase of Great Name. Imam Baqir instructed not to reveal it and he raised his hand and they found themselves back into the chamber⁸.

According to one narration in Kitab Al-Ikhtesas by sheikh Mufeed, Ibn Abbas said:

Syriac speaking prophets were Adam, Seth, Idris, Noah and Abraham. Originally Adam used to speak Arabic but on committing sin his language was replaced by Syriac. Five prophets used to speak Hebrew: Ishaq, Yaqob, Moses, David, Jesus

was corruption of Aesop, Roman slave and wisdom seeker. See Rapoport, in Ozar ha-Hokmah, ed. J. Barasch, p. iii. (Vienna, 1856)

⁶ see Note N1 for full Arabic text

⁷ Bihar Al-Anwar by Mulla Baqar Al-Majlisi 13

⁸ See N2 for Arabic text

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Syriac is considered even older than Hebrew and Arabic was considered as language of Heaven. Such modifications are done in later period which not only shows the lack of understanding of development of languages by narrators but also the aggrandisement of Arabic language. This is contrary to hidden teachings of Imams as they themselves used mystical Hebrew or Syriac Names of God instead of Quranic or Arabic Names of God.

NOTES

[N1] Mulla Baqar Al-Majlisi wrote in Vol-41, pp 178-179:

محمد بن الحسين ، عن عبد الله بن جبلة ، عن أبي الجارود قال : سمعت جويرية يقول : أصرى علي بنا من كربلاء إلى الفرات ، فلما صرنا ببابل قال لي : أي موضع يسمى هذا يا جويرية ؟ قلت : هذه بابل يا أمير المؤمنين ، قال : أما إنه لا يحل لربي ولا وصي نبي أن يصلي بأرض قد عذبت مرتين ، قال : قلت : هذه العصر يا أمير المؤمنين فقد وجبت الصلاة يا أمير المؤمنين ، قال : قد أخبرتك أنه لا يحل لربي ولا وصي نبي أن يصلي بأرض قد عذبت مرتين وهي تتوقع الثالثة ، إذا طلع كوكب الذنب وعقد جسر بابل قتلوا عليه مائة ألف تخوضه الخيل إلى السنايك ، قال جويرية : والله لأقلدن صلاتي اليوم أمير المؤمنين عليه السلام ، وعطف علي عليه السلام برأس بغلة رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله الدلدل حتى جاز سوراء قال لي : أذن بالعصر يا جويرية فأذنت ، وخلا علي ناحية فتكلم بكلام له سرياني أو عبراني ، فرأيت للشمس صريرا وانتقاضا حتى عادت بيضاء نقية قال : ثم قال : أقم ، فأقمتم ثم صلى بنا فصلينا معه ، فلما سلم اشتبكت النجوم فقلت : وصي نبي ورب الكعبة

[N2] Muhmmad bin Hasan Al-Saffar in Basair Al-Darjat pg 230

حدثنا الحسن بن علي بن عبد الله عن الحسين بن علي بن فضال عن داود بن أبي يزيد عن بعض أصحابنا عن عمر بن حنظلة فقال قلت لأبي جعفر عليه السلام اني أظن أن لي عندك منزلة قال اجل قال قلت فان لي إليك حاجة قال وما هي قال قلت تعلمني الاسم الأعظم قال وتطبيقه قلت نعم قال فادخل البيت قال فدخل البيت فوضع أبو جعفر يده على الأرض فاظلم البيت فأرعدت فرايص عمر فقال ما تقول أعلمك فقال لا قال فرفع يده فرجع البيت كما كان

Chapter 7

Aaron, Ali & Stones

*Odem [carnelian, ruby] appertains to Reuben
Pitdah [topaz] the stone of Simeon
Bareket [emerald] . . . is the stone of Levi
Yahalom [emerald] This is the stone of Zebulun
Shebo [agate] is the stone of Naphtali
Shoham [onyx] is the stone called nikli [an agate] is Joseph's stone
Turquoise is the stone of Dan
-Jewish Sages ¹*

STONES were regarded as source of power since ancient times. According to Talmud, Abraham possessed a gem which could heal all those who looked upon it².

God instructed Aaron to wear following stones in Book of Exodus³: *Exodus 28:17 Then mount four rows of precious stones on it. The first row shall be carnelian, chrysolite and beryl;*

Exodus 28:18 the second row shall be turquoise, lapis lazuli and emerald;

Exodus 28:19 the third row shall be jacinth, agate and amethyst;

Exodus 28:20 the fourth row shall be topaz, onyx and jasper⁴. Mount them in gold filigree settings. Book of Exodus (28:30) instructed⁵:

Also put the Urim and the Thummim אֲוִרִים וְתֻמִּיִּם in the breastpiece, so they may be over Aaron's heart whenever he enters the presence of the LORD. Thus Aaron will always bear the means of making decisions for the Israelites over his heart before the LORD.

According to Ginzberg's Legends of the Jews:

¹ Targum, Jewish Magic and Superstition, by Joshua Trachtenberg, 1939

² Jewish Magic and Superstition, by Joshua Trachtenberg, 1939

³ Chapter 28:17-20

⁴ Agate is usually more translucent while Jasper refers to its opaque relative.

⁵ Leviticus 8:8

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The twelve stones in the breastplate, with their bright colours, were of great importance in the oracular sentences of the high priest, who by means of these stones made the Urim and Thummim exercise their functions

According to Josephus⁶: were twelve stones which were set in three rows of four stones in the breastplate (3.7.5). Josephus described the Urim as being two sardonyx⁷ stones that were placed on the shoulders of the high priest (3.8.9).

Josephus also said:

God declared beforehand, by those twelve stones which the high priest bore on his breast, and which were inserted into his breastplate, when they should be victorious in battle; for so great a splendour shone forth from them before the army began to march, that all the people were sensible of God's being present for their assistance (216-217).

Maimonides wrote in Ramban:

"[The urim, (specifically)] were holy names, by whose power the letters on the stones of the breastplate lit up to the eyes of the priest who was asking for judgment. For example, when they asked 'who should lead the way for us to fight against the Canaanites?' the priest would concentrate on the Divine names which are the urim, and the letters would light up to his eyes [But] he still did not know their correct order, for from the letters which can be ordered 'Yehuda ya'aleh (Judah shall go up) it is possible to make of them 'hey al Yehuda' (woe unto Judah) and many other words. . . . there were also other holy names called tumim, by whose power the heart of the priest was made perfect in the knowledge of the meaning of the letters which lit up to his eyes, for when he concentrated on the urim and the letters lit up, he then immediately meditated on the names which are the tumim, while the letters were still lit up to his eyes, and there appeared in his heart that the order was 'Yehuda ya'aleh' (Judah shall go up). This is one of the levels of Divine inspiration, lower than prophecy, and higher than a Heavenly voice..."

Āli as High Priest needs to wear the stones in rings. So he wore stones especially red agate and turquoise.

Imam Raza narrated from Musa bin Jafar and he from his forefathers and they from Imam Hussain that:

when Holy one created Moses and spoke with him on Mount Sinai, He looked at the Earth and created Agate from the Light of His Countenance and said: "I have made this incumbent upon me that whoever wears the Aqiq (Red agate) I will not punish him with Fire with the condition that he takes Āli as his friend"

Āli said: "Wear the ring of Aqiq (Red Agate), it will protect you and save you from calamities"⁸ Ubaidullah bin Ali narrated from Imam Abi Hasan Musa said: A believer

⁶ Antiquity of the Jews, book three, chapter seven

⁷ Sardonyx is a stone in which the coloured bands are sard (shades of red)

⁸ AlWasial, Vol-III, pg 402

is always with five things - one of them is ring of Aqeeq (Agate)⁹. According to Imam Baqir the Quranic verse “Acquire your embellishment before prayer”¹⁰ means the wearing of ring of Aqiq¹¹. In one other report it is advised to wear Yellow agate (Aqiq Al-Asfar). Sheikh Jafar quoted Prophet’s words¹²:

Allah says I will give my slave who raise his hands and having the ring of turquoise

On one side of turquoise (Ferozaj) it should be written “Allahu Melek” and on the other side it should be written “Al-Melek Al-Wahid Al-Qahar” also on Yellow Agate rings it should be inscribed by some God names. Emerald is also recommended by Imam Musa bin Jafar to avoid calamities.

According to Jewish history Moses received the Law from God but God declared Aaron as His High Priest. Ghulat got the idea from there for them Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) completed his role by giving Quran. Now Āli is the High Priest appointed by God and his interpretation of law is important. For them Āli knows his true identity but not publicly revealing it. Seeing that matter is not in their hands they started making narrations to support their view. It is reported that long before Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) migration to Medinah. Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) had been informed that Āli would be the Future Inheritor (High Priesthood).

Narrated Imam Sadiq¹³ that prophet said:

when reached where there was nothing between me and Allah and there was no angel or prophet. I did not asked anything unless I received better of it. at that time this came to my mind:

You are only a warner, and for every Ummah has a guide.

so I asked Allah: O my Lord you placed me as Warner, but who is the Guide of my Ummah? Allah replied O Muhammad! he is Āli ibn Abi Talib - he is guide and leader of who found my way and who are pious . . .

In the Night of Ascension, God spoke to Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) in voice of Āli. Narrated Abdullah ibn Umar¹⁴:

I heard someone ask the Prophet of Allah , ‘With what voice did Allah, the Glorified and High, speak to you in on the night of the Ascension? The Prophet replied, My Lord spoke to me with the voice of Āli ibn Abi Talib and

⁹ Misbah Al-Mutjahid by Sheikh Al-Tusi

¹⁰ surah Al-Aaraf

¹¹ al-Mustanad Al-Shia by Al-Mhaqiq Al-Traqi, Vol-IV

¹² Kashaf Al-Ghata, Vol-II

¹³ Bihar al Anwar vol.9 page 76

¹⁴ Kashf al Ghummah, Vol. 1, p. 106

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said, O Ahmad! I am a being that is not like anything else. I can not be compared to anything else and I know all the secrets of your heart. With the exception of Āli ibn Abi Talib, you have no other close friend. Thus, I speak to you with the voice of Āli ibn Abi Talib so that your heart will be at ease.

Shiite also claim that while Āli was still on Earth, in Night of Ascension Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) saw an angel of God like Āli¹⁵.

The Prophet declared that when he performed the Ascension, the angels inquired very particularly about Ali. When I arrived, he continued, at the fourth heaven, I saw the angel of death, who said that it was his office to take the soul of every creature by God's command; but in the case of you and Āli I will have to take your consent. When I came under the Empyrean (Highest Heaven), I saw Āli ibn Abi Talib standing there, and said to him, O Ali have you got there before me? Whom are you addressing, asked Gabriel. My brother, I replied. This is not Ali, said he, but an angel of the Merciful God, whom He created in the likeness of Ali and when those of us privileged to approach near the Deity wish to behold Ali, we visit this angel.

It means there were two Āli an angelic apparition at the Highest Heaven and another earthly form of it. Both of them too higher in ranks of angels and humans. Even Prophet got perplexed to see the Divine Mysteries. Book of Genesis too mentioned king of Salem with mysterious role. In Genesis 14.8 it is said:

And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Elyon (Most High)

The God Most High is עֶלְיֹן (Elyon) in Hebrew. In Pslam 110:4 God said to David:

The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind, You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

David was made a Priest (kohen) or Imam like Melchizedek. Melchizedek in Arabic means Zedek (Truthful) Melek (King or Caliph). Āli too being like Elijah and Aaron attained the order of Melchizedek. Āli then was the real Zedek. The title cannot be given to any one else except him. So Al-Minhal bin Amr said that Āli said¹⁶:

I am salve of God and brother of Muhammad and I am the greatest Siddiq (Zedek), No one can claim this after me - except the liar

Also for Ghulats as God appointed Aaron as High Priest and David also as a Priest in order of Melchizedek, appointment of Āli is divinely ordained.

¹⁵ Bihar Al-Anwar

¹⁶ Sunan Ibn Majah

Āli liked agate and turquoise, stones of tribe of Dan and Naphtali, which were the lost tribes of Israel¹⁷. This is very interesting. According to Jewish scholars Dan and Naphtali were considered not entirely of Israelite origin as these tribes were originated from Bilhah, the handmaid of Jacob's wife Rachel. Bilah was thus a concubine of Jacob. According to Book of Judges, tribe of Dan was settled in Laish (now called Tel Al-Qadi or Tel-Dan and located in northern kingdom of Israel. Tribe of Dan was second largest according to book of Numbers. Tribe of Dan and Naphtali had a trouble in accusing their leaders of corruption and they were ruled by Judges instead of a central government. Prophet Saul appointed Talut as king over these tribes¹⁸. Tribe had scale of Justice as its emblem¹⁹. Tribe of Naphtali like Dan was also located in the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Assyrian conquered the northern kingdom and exiled tribe of Dan and Naphtali.

According to Jewish scholar Tudor Parfitt ²⁰

In the nineteenth century even the Jewish world knew relatively little of the Jews of South Arabia. In 1831 Rabbi Yisrael of Shklov sent an emissary to Yemen ... emissaries who had visited Yemen some years before and who had claimed to have met members of the tribe of Dan in the deserts of Yemen..

It is also stated in this book:

The conviction that the lost tribes were to be found in the more remote areas of the Yemen was one which was shared by the Yemenite Jews themselves. Over the centuries they had elaborated numerous legends about the tribes, and particularly about the supposed valour of the Tribe of Dan

Also for tribe of Naphtali it is claimed that they settled in Bactria (Khurasan) and Persia²¹ and some of them mixed with Yemenite Jews.

It is therefore now quiet evident that tribe of Dan enjoys an elevated status among Yemenite Jews and It is possible that Ibn Sabā also belonged to this tribe. Another important aspect is the veneration of Elijah. Elijah was the most distinguished prophet in northern kingdom, Kingdom of Israel (Samaria) who appeared in 9th century BCE and admonished Jews on worship of Baal. Association of Āli with Elijah and ritual of making the stone of Dan as ring all indicate that these proto-Shiites were Jewish mystics from Yemen and belonged to tribes of northern Kingdom of Israel most likely tribe of Dan or Naphtali. It is thus no wonder that Asbagh bin Nabata originally from Yemen settled in Kufa claimed that Āli is Elijah.

¹⁷ In 930 BC ten tribes of Bene Israel formed an independent Kingdom of Israel in the north and two other tribes, Judah and Benjamin, formed the Kingdom of Judah in the south. Assyrian destroyed Kingdom of Israel before destruction of First Temple (722 BC) and all ten tribes history is lost.

¹⁸ Shiites quote this passage of surah al-Baqarah in support of their Imamate concept

¹⁹ Shiites believe that most important attribute of God after Unity is Adal or Justice

²⁰ See The Road to Redemption: The Jews of the Yemen, 1900 - 1950 by Tudor Parfitt, 1996, Brill Publisher, Netherland

²¹ See Jewish Encyclopedia: "in 1646 one Baruch, travelling in Persia, claimed to have met a man named Malkiel of the tribe of Naphtali"

Chapter 8

Ali- The Second Power in Heaven

*I am the one who crossed Sea along Moses
and drown Pharaoh and his troops*
-A statement attributed to Āli

BIBLE including Torah and Prophetic Books contains many contradictory verses. Some of the Jewish sects inclined towards mysticism have developed the belief of veneration of an angelic being in Heavens¹.

In Hebrew scriptures there is indication of divine polarity. There is an invisible God and manifested God. Angel of Wrath is acting independently of God and this Angel even could kill Moses and believing people if they do not follow him (see Exodus 23). According to Book of Exodus:

Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed.

Moses thus spoke with a god-like being. In some biblical passages Divine Names appeared twice in odd way to indicate that God and His Name are acting independently (Genesis 19:24; Amos 4:11).

Then the **LORD** rained on Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur and fire from the **LORD of Heaven**

The Great Divine Name manifested as an Angel who thinks independent of God. Even Ark of Covenant has power as it was actually the incarnation of Name of God (see 2 Samuel 6:1-2). According to Jews Ark contains *Sekinah* (feminine version of God's power). God name has lips (Isaiah 30:27). Prophet Jacob has asked blessings of God and Angel separately for his sons (Genesis 48:14-16). Angel of God and God himself also appear simultaneously (like in Judges 6:1-23). Later this angel is identified as Angel

¹ See Two Powers in Heaven, Alan F. Segal, Brill, 1977

CHAPTER 8. ALI- THE SECOND POWER IN HEAVEN

of Presence in some places and in mystical texts as Metatron (an unknown angel) in mystical Jewish literature. From such passages some heretic Jewish sects inferred the erroneous concept of Two Power in Heavens.

Surprisingly all these motifs were weaved around one person is Shiite Islam i.e. Āli. Hafiz Rajab Al-Barsi quoted Āli speech² the speech of Āli :

*I have the keys of unseen, no one knows them after Prophet of Allah except me; I am Zul-Qarnain mentioned in previous scriptures; I am the Lord of ring of Solomon; I am the Reckoner; I am Lord of Sirat(Path over Hell) and Wait (on Judgement Day); I am divider of Paradise and Fire as per my Lord's command; **I am the First Adam; I am the first Noah;** I am sign of Jabbar; I am the reality of secrets; I am the leaf of trees and giver of fruits; I am the one who erupted rivers and the treasurer over knowledge; I am mountain of humility I am Ameer Al-Momineen. I am the Eye of Belief. I am the verdict of God on Skies and Earth. I am the Tremor; I am the Lightening. I am the Calamity, I am the hour that none can deny. I am the book without doubt. **I am Names of God** which He commanded to be used in prayers. I am the Light though which comes Guidance. I am the possessor of Sur(Trumpet), I am the opener of graves. I am the man of Resurrection. I was with Noah and those who were saved. I am the companion of Job the inflicted one and his cure. **I erected Heavens on my Lord's command.** I am companion of Abraham. I am the secret of Moses. I am the one who look-after Kingdom of God. I am the command of the Living who will not die; I am the Guardian by right over all creation; I am the one in front of whom words are not changed; and the Judgement of Creation is executed on my order. I am the vicegerent of God the creator. I am the secret of God in cities and His verdict on this slaves. **I am command of God and His (Holy) Spirit,** as Holy One Himself said They ask about Rouh Say Rouh is from Command of my Lord. ... I am Silent (unspoken Quran) and Muhammad was the speaker, **I am the one who crossed Sea along Moses and drown Pharaoh and his troops** ... I am the one who spoke from the cradle through language of Jesus and also prayed before him ...*

There is nothing left to explain such explicit proclamation of divinity or Second Power in Heaven. Biblical scholarship in last fifty years has proved that some of the ancient Jews held the concept of Two Power in Heavens and Ghulats having such believes with Jewish origin is not a surprise.

² Called *Khutbah-tul-Bayan* See in Mashariq Al-Anwar, pp 269-270; Also Al-Zarya by Aqa Buzurg Al-Tahrani, Vol-VII, See Note N1 for Arabic Text

NOTES

[N1] Hafiz Rajab Al-Barsi quoted Arabic text in Mashariq Al-Anwar, pp 269-270³:

أنا عندي مفاتيح الغيب ، لا يعلمها بعد رسول الله إلا أنا ، أنا ذو القرنين المذكور في الصحف الأولى ، أنا صاحب خاتم سليمان ، أنا ولي الحساب ، أنا صاحب الصراط والموقف ، قلم الحجة والنار بأمر ربي ، أنا آدم الأول ، أنا نوح الأول ، أنا آية الجبار ، أنا حقيقة الأسرار ، أنا موريق الأشجار ، أنا مونغ الثمار ، أنا مفجر العيون ، أنا مجري الأنهار ، أنا خازن العلم ، أنا طود الحلم ، أنا أمير المؤمنين ، أنا عين اليقين ، أنا حجة الله في السماوات والأرض ، أنا الراجفة ، أنا الصاعقة ، أنا الصيحة بالحق ، أنا الساعة لمن كذب بها ، أنا ذلك الكتاب الذي لا ريب فيه ، أنا الأسماء الحسنى التي أمر أن يدعى بها ، أنا ذلك النور الذي اقتبس منه الهدى ، أنا صاحب الصور ، أنا مخرج من في القبور ، أنا صاحب يوم النشور ، أنا صاحب نوح ومنجيه ، أنا صاحب أيوب المبتلى وشافيه ، أنا أقيمت السماوات بأمر ربي ، أنا صاحب إبراهيم ، أنا سر الكلم . أنا الناظر في الملكوت ، أنا أمر الهي الذي لا يموت ، أنا ولي الحق على سائر الخلق ، أنا الذي لا يبدل القول لدي ، وحساب الخلق إلي ، أنا المفوض إلي أمر الخلائق ، أنا خليفة الإله الخالق ، أنا سر الله في بلاده ، وحجته على عباده ، أنا أمر الله والروح ، كما قال سبحانه : ويسألونك عن الروح قل الروح من أمر ربي . أنا أرسيت الجبال الشاخصات ، ونفخت العيون الجارية ، أنا غارس الأشجار ، ومخرج الألوان والثمار ، أنا مقدر الأقوات ، أنا ناشر الأموات ، أنا منزل القطر ، أنا منور الشمس والقمر والنجوم ، أنا قيم القيامة ، أنا القيم الساعة ، أنا الواجب له من الله الطاعة ، أنا سر الله المخزون ، أنا العالم بما كان وما يكون ، أنا صلوات المؤمنين وصيائهم ، أنا مولاهم وإمامهم ، أنا صاحب النشر الأول والآخر ، أنا صاحب المناقب والمفاخر ، أنا صاحب الكواكب ، أنا عذاب الله الواصب ، أنا مهلك الجبابرة الأول ، أنا مزيل الدول ، أنا صاحب الزلازل والرجف ، أنا صاحب الكسوف والخسوف ، أنا مدمر الفراعنة بسيفي هذا ، أنا الذي أقامني الله في الأظلة ودعاهم إلى طاعتي ، فلما ظهرت أنكروا ، فقال الله سبحانه : فلما جاءهم ما عرفوا كفروا به ، أنا نور الأنوار ، أنا حامل العرش مع الأبرار ، أنا صاحب الكتب السالفة ، أنا باب الله الذي لا يفتح لمن كذب به ولا يذوق الحجة ، أنا الذي تزدهم الملائكة على فراشي ، وتعرفني عباد أقاليم الدنيا ، أنا ردت لي الشمس مرتين ، وسلمت علي كرتين ، وصليت مع رسول الله القبلتين ، وبايعت البيعتين ، أنا صاحب بدر وجنين ، أنا الطور ، أنا الكتاب المسطور ، أنا البحر المسجور ، أنا البيت المعمور ، أنا الذي دعا الله الخلائق إلى طاعتي ، فكفرت ، وأصرت ، فمسخت ، وأجابت أمة فنجت ، وأزلت ، أنا الذي بيدي مفاتيح الجنان ، ومقاليد النيران ، كرامة من الله ، أنا مع رسول الله في الأرض وفي السماء ، أنا المسيح حيث لا روح يتحرك ولا نفس يتنفس غيري ، أنا صاحب القرون الأولى ، أنا الصامت ومحمد الناطق ، أنا جاوزت بموسى في البحر ، وأغرقت فرعون وجنوده ، وأنا أعلم همهم البهائم ، ومنطق الطير ، أنا الذي أجوز السماوات السبع والأرضين السبع في طرفة عين ، أنا المتكلم على لسان عيسى في المهد ، أنا الذي يصلي عيسى خلفي ، أنا الذي أنقلب في الصور كيف شاء الله ، أنا مصباح الهدى ، أنا مفتاح التقى ، أنا الآخرة والأولى ، أنا الذي أرى أعمال العباد ، أنا خازن السماوات والأرض بأمر رب العالمين

³ Also called *Khutbah-tul-Bayan* See Al-Zarya by Aqa Buzurg Al-Tahrani, Vol-VII,

Chapter 9

Who was Ali?

I am slave of God and son of Abu Talib
-Āli ibn Abi Talib

WHO was Āli ? This is the question which cannot be answered with out bias or prejudice. One way or other, one of the sects of Muslims, would disagree with the interpretation of Quran, hadith and history.

According to Ghulat, Āli was not an ordinary man. He was a Mystery of God. According to them he himself was hiding his true identity. Ghulat's were most likely converts from Judaism but most likely they belong to some heretic sect of Yemenite origin. Ghulats took their heretic Jewish believes and started reading Quran and connected Quran with the biblical motifs. They see in personality of Āli the manifestation of Great Angelic being perhaps image of God. For them he was the first image of God, the first Adam that was created not from dust but from the very Light of Almighty.

For them he was the manifestation of Enoch or Elijah. Āli roams in clouds and see all seven Earth or seven heavenly planets known in the then ancient Arabia. He was the power of God, the Name of God in Human flesh. For them Āli was the Creature of Earth and would reappear at the end of times. Ghulats were so convinced about their believes that even some of them preferred to be burnt alive instead of renouncing their faith.

Āli must have felt helpless in this situation. He did whatever he can do to stop heretics to aggrandize him. But like Jesus he was converted into a being as holy as God. His Shiites (supporters) took him as High Priest or Imam and claimed that he posses the secret knowledge passed down to him through Prophet.

Later Shiites fiercely denounced Ghulats but knowingly or unknowingly adapted their ideas into their religious corpus. Sunni School of though had a more balanced view of his personality. Āli is considered as a devout Muslim and companion of Prophet Muhammad (*Peace be upon him*) . However the Sufi sect aggrandised him and preached *Batini* or hidden concepts. He is showed as possessor of secret *Sufi* knowledge which Prophet Muhammad (*Peace be upon him*) only transferred to him.

Well known Personalities and Narrators who belong to *Ghulat* Sects

- [1] **Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Hanfiah (grandson of Āli)** Narrated Imam Ali al-Madini that Al-Zuhri said: Abdullah bin Muhammad belonged to Al-Sabbaiyah¹
- [2] **Kudair Al-Dibbi** Used to say in prayer Salam to Prophet and to his Wasi²
- [3] **Asbag bin Nabata (d. 110 AH)** Believed in the Returning³
- [4] **Rashid Al-Hijri contemporary of Ali** He believed in The Returning⁴
- [5] **Younis bin Khabib**
- [6] **Dawud bin Yazeed**
- [7] **Al-Mughairah bin Saeed**
- [8] **Bayan bin Saman**
- [9] **Jabir bin Yazeed (d. 130 AH)** He believed in The Returning⁵
- [10] **Harith bin Hasirah (d. 150 AH)**
- [11] **Muhammad bin Sa'b Al-Kalbi**
- [12] **Ismael bin Khalifah**
- [13] **Abu Yaqzan Uthman bin Umair Al-Bijli (d. 150 AH)** Believed in The Returning⁶
- [14] **Amr bin Jabir Al-Hadrami**
- [15] **Thabit bin Abi-Safiyah (d. 150 AH)** Narrator of Sunna Abi Dawud. He believed in The Returning⁷
- [16] **Amr bin Thabit bin Al-Harmad**
- [17] **Furat bin Al-Ahnaf**
- [18] **Talid bin Sulaiman**
- [19] **Nasr bin Al-Sabah**
- [20] **Ali bin Haskah**
- [21] **Muhammad bin Qasim bin Zakariyah Al-Sudani (d. 326 AH)** He believed in The Returning⁸
- [22] **Seyyed Al-Humairi** The poet. He believed in The Returning⁹.
- [23] **Muslim bin Nadir or Yazid** He believed in The Returning¹⁰
- [24] **Kuthayyir 'Azza The Poet (d. 100 AH)-** He believed in The Returning¹¹
- [25] **Abdullah bin Hussain (d. 140 AH)** He believed in The Returning¹²
- [26] **Dawud bin Yazid** He believed in The Returning¹³

¹ Tahreekh Al-Kabeer by Bukhari

² Doafa Al-Uqaili

³ Doafa Al-Uqaili

⁴ Sair Al-Allam Al-Nubla by Al-Dahabi

⁵ Tahzeeb Al-Tahzeeb by Ibn Hajr; Sair Al-Allam Al-Nubla by Al-Dahabi

⁶ See Tahzeeb Al-Tahzeeb by Ibn Hajr

⁷ Yazid bin Harun said he believed in The Returning. See Tahzeeb Al-Tahzeeb by Ibn Hajr

⁸ Hussain bin Nasr bin Mazahim said he believed in The Returning. See Sair Al-Allam Al-Nubla by Al-Dahabi

⁹ Tabqat Al-Shuara by Ibn AlMotaiz Al-Abbasi (d. 296 AH)

¹⁰ See Tahzeeb Al-Tahzeeb by Ibn Hajr

¹¹ See Tareekh by Zubair bin Bakar

¹² Sair Al-Allam Al-Nubla by Al-Dahabi

¹³ Ikmal Tahzeeb Al-Kamal by Mugaltai

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This book is about glorification of Āli in Islamic Mysticism. The first sect in Islam is known as *The Ghulat*. Ghulat were “The Exaggerators” who claimed that Āli ibn Abi Talib was God incarnated. Āli was the cousin of Prophet Muhammad (*Peace be upon him*) and husband of his third daughter, Fatimah. Most of these sects originated after death of Prophet Muhammad. Ghulats were different from Sunni and Shiite school of thought. Ghulats were heavily influenced by Jewish motifs and biblical themes and view Quran as continuation like a biblical books of Prophets. Their interpretation of Quranic verses was more allegoric and hidden hinting towards mysticism. For some of them Āli was Elijah, yet for some others the descend of Primordial man on Earth. Some took Āli as High Priest Aaron. Later Shiites fiercely denounced Ghulats but knowingly or unknowingly adapted their ideas into their religious corpus. A chapter on Sufi thought is also added to complete the picture.